THE END OF MODERNITY: TEMPORALITIES OF NATION, INDIGENEITY, AND THE ANTHROPOCENE IN THE CONTEMPORARY INDEPENDENT CINEMA OF THE PHILIPPINES

by

ROGELIO F. GARCIA JR.

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of English
and the Division of Graduate Studies of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

June 2021

DISSERTATION APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Rogelio F. Garcia Jr.

Title: The End of Modernity: Temporalities of Nation, Indigeneity, and the Anthropocene in the Contemporary Independent Cinema of the Philippines

This dissertation has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of English by:

Sangita Gopal	Chairperson
Sarah Wald	Core Member
Sergio Rigoletto	Core Member
Michael Allan	Institutional Representative

and

Andy Karduna	Interim Vice Provost for Graduate Studies

Original approval signatures are on file with the University of Oregon Division of Graduate Studies.

Degree Awarded June 2021.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Rogelio F. Garcia Jr.

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English

June 2021

Title: The End of Modernity: Temporalities of Nation, Indigeneity, and the Anthropocene in the Contemporary Independent Cinema of the Philippines

This dissertation argues that the multiple temporalities of the subaltern, the indigenous, and the Anthropocene operate as critique against the homogenous developmental time of the postcolonial nation as constructed by the contemporary independent cinema of the Philippines. It maintains that the nation-form is fundamentally broken by proposing analytic models called auto-critiques of modernity namely, *persistence*, *autonomy*, *fluidity*, and *transcendence*. *Persistence* interrogates the nation-form as a force of death when imagined as closed, unified, and homogenous in *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* (2014) by Lav Diaz. The Diaz shot is a critique to the imperialism of mainstream cinema and isomorphic to the nation-form in its triadic structure of nation-space, national temporality, and laboring subaltern bodies persisting in the state of bare life. *Autonomy* asserts an inner sovereignty of land-based indigenous peoples within the geo-political power of the nation-state. It establishes *Manoro* (2006) by Brillante Mendoza as an ecofilm that brings together environmental, racial, and indigenous issues and calls for the scholarly recognition and circulation of ecocinema as a genre in Philippine cinema. *Fluidity* expands the optics of the nation-state to recognize indigeneity

that is anchored on water in Brillante Mendoza's *Thy Womb* (2012). This chapter proposes the concept of littoral sovereignty to acknowledge the fluid ways in which indigenous peoples who live on water maintain cultural and political sovereignty over the coastal zones and seas which they navigate as their cosmos. It problematizes the abjection of the Badjao as the ultimate enactment of self-sovereignty and agency. *Transcendence* refers to the rupture of the nation-state due to climate catastrophes in Lav Diaz's *Storm Children* (2014). This chapter argues that climate catastrophes create ahistorical subjects through a scalar trauma that disrupts the temporality of national subjects and reorganizes it to a new temporality built around trauma as its point of reference. It problematizes the Anthropocene as an issue of power differentials and reads *Storm Children* as an installation which transfixes the spectator through the extreme long take and single-camera technique in the new geographical coordinates of the trauma field.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME OF AUTHOR: Rogelio F. Garcia Jr.

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

University of Oregon, Eugene
Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, Cagayan de Oro
Mindanao State University, Marawi

DEGREES AWARDED:

Doctor of Philosophy, English, 2021, University of Oregon
Master of Arts, English, 2014, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan
Bachelor of Arts, English, 2009, Mindanao State University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:

Global South Film and Media
Indigenous Studies
Postcolonial Theory
Environmental Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Graduate Employee, Department of English, University of Oregon, 2016-2021
Instructor, Department of English, Xavier University-Ateneo de Cagayan, 2010-present
Instructor, Johns Hopkins University-Center for Talented Youth, 2019
Instructor, Department of English, Mindanao State University, 2009-2010

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS:

Dissertation Fellow, Oregon Humanities Center, 2020
Southeast Asian Studies Award, University of Oregon, 2020
Sherwood Research Travel Award, University of Oregon, 2018
Graduate Scholar, Fulbright Commission, 2016
Graduate Scholar for Foreign Studies (Philippines), CHED, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deep gratitude to my advisor and chairperson of the dissertation committee, Sangita Gopal, for the guidance, generosity, and patience and to panel members Sarah Wald, Sergio Rigoletto, and Michael Allan for their mentorship and encouragement. The synergy of these great minds and persons made it possible for me to finish this dissertation despite the pandemic. Thank you to the two directors of graduate studies at the Department of English, Lara Bovilsky and Mary Wood, for going the extra mile taking care of graduate students and to Dong Hoon Kim of the Cinema Studies Department for the brilliant and uplifting conversations. Much thanks to the Oregon Humanities Center for the fellowship that allowed me to focus on writing two chapters. I am indebted to the Philippine Fulbright, the IIE, and the Commission on Higher Education in the Philippines for partially funding my graduate studies in the US and to my home institution, Xavier University, for allowing me to study on official leave. I thank as well Stephen Rust and Salma Monani for the encouragement and for reading chapters in this dissertation and Edmund Telmo for helping me with my correspondence with filmmakers during my field work in the Philippines. Lastly, I thank my family and friends who were always there, often with great care, food, and laughter, to see me through my entire PhD journey.

To the indigenous peoples of the Philippines

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Where the Road Ends

Bae Magdas, a war refugee and an indigenous nobility from a dispersed community of Higaonons, drags her footsteps as she accompanies her daughter, Bitoon, to the end of the asphalt road that leads to the city. From here, the recruiters from the lowland will fetch Bitoon, bring her to the city, and send her abroad to work as a domestic helper. This is Bae Magdas' way of saving Bitoon from the destitute and war-torn life that they live in the mountain. To arrive at the end of the road means Bae Magdas had to work hard selling metal scraps and borrow twenty thousand pesos to pay the recruiters who processed Bitoon's placement. The lender is an abusive tribal leader, Datu Mantukaw, in whose territory they seek refuge. If Bae Magdas cannot pay, the young Bitoon will be forced to become Datu Mantukaw's third wife. To arrive at the end of the road means Bitoon and her suitcase have to be carried on a *karumata* pulled by a water buffalo across the muddy and dense forest. Upon reaching the asphalt road, Bae Magdas puts away Bitoon's slippers and replaces it with stilettos to prepare her for departure. Bae Magdas, Bitoon, and Lingig (Bitoon's secret lover) wait for a long time in the wooden bench under the rain. The recruiters never arrive.

Arnel Marduquio's *Crossfire* (2011), an independent film shot in Claveria, Misamis Oriental, a municipality located seventy kilometers away from my hometown in Mindanao, Philippines, probes into the lives of indigenous subjects who are displaced by war, caught in the crossfire between the rebel and military forces, and made to suffer

under the rule of a cruel datu (tribal chief). The sequence composed of extreme long takes imposes the languor of waiting for a long duration with the characters until I start to fear and anticipate that their hope and pain of sending Bitoon away are wasted. The harvest of subaltern bodies in the Philippines, most often of women, and the feeding of their labor to the global capital flow as domestic helpers is a common mechanics of how indigenous subjects experience the negative arrival of modernity in the most remote spaces in the Global South. The non-arrival of scamming recruiters, supposedly a thwarting of the impending exploitation of Bitoon, is a sub-economy resulting around the harvest of these bodies. The mechanics has failed but Bae Magdas and Bitoon are still exploited even in its failure.

Buried in debt and no longer living in safe spaces because of war, conversion of farmland, and loss of ancestral domains are an internal dislocation that has created a third temporality of indigenous subjects that perpetually grinds against cyclical and linear time. While the aesthetics of the long take simultaneously visualizes the experience of modernity as slow and the *typical* notion of the cyclicality of subaltern life, it paradoxically makes absent-present the violence of being suspended in neither linear and cyclical temporalities. Bae Magdas, Bitoon, and Lingig go back to the hinterland that has already expelled them. Back to spaces unreached by the asphalt road, the sole and ultimate sign of the nation's effort—and failure—to bring into the fold those who hunger most for its benevolence. The communist insurgency by the New People's Army known to be the longest in Asia has proven indissoluble despite its weakening force for the past five decades. The revolution is the nation-state's nemesis that is determined to overthrow

the government. According to Jose Maria-Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, "[the CPP] has analysed the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society and has identified the basic problems of the Filipino people, such as imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism" (qtd. in Robles), legacies of the colonial experience for four centuries. The government's failure to eliminate the revolution within the nation-state suggests the competing and incompatible elements that comprise the national body. Local insurgencies now framed as terrorism are rooted on ideologies that cannot be extricated by the government if they do not effectively and sincerely address the conditions that foster these ideologies. The war of ideologies translating into decades-long encounters have transformed indigenous spaces as battlefields.

Figure 1. At the end of the road—Bae Magdas removes Bitoon's heels; Lingig carries back Bitoon's suitcase; *Crossfire* (2011) by Arnel Mardoquio

Nationalism and Its Ambivalence

Nationalism while an important force behind the emergence of the postcolonial nation is ambivalent when its pitfalls are examined in the context of the imperialism and culturalism of the West, the protective and isolationist stance of the nations in the Tricontinent, that is, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and the problematic outcome of the postcolonial nation as a historical formation that hinges on modernity and capitalism—an incomplete and fundamentally broken structure. To stretch the limit of postcoloniality as a framework that repeats the historical structure of the colonial narrative, privileges the nation and hegemony in the discourse, and obsesses with the polemic towards the nation as a problem, this dissertation situates the conversation in a forking path towards the decolonial: first, as pre-requisite, by pointing out ways in which the nation is a self-fractured concept, that is, its inherent structural anomaly is its own definition, and second by re-imagining models in which incommensurable temporalities determine the nation's structure through a body of independent films from the Philippines that signify the subaltern and the indigenous engagement and negotiation with the postcolonial nation-state. Herein I call as auto-critiques of modernity, these models dismantle the nation's homogenous temporality and expose its complicities within neocolonial and neoliberal regimes to democratize time, that is, to recognize the multiple temporalities of the indigenous *outside-within* the nation-form and the climate subalterns who become ahistorical subjects after emerging out of the catastrophes caused by the Anthropocene. Imbricating postcoloniality with critiques to capitalism allows me to analyze the modern nation-state in its emerging forms and characters, always implicating class dynamics, that

is, the takeover of the national bourgeoisie is the nation's intrinsic structural defect compounded with extractive foreign neocolonial techniques.

The emergence of nationalism is a phenomenon that simultaneously occurred with the decay of older cultural systems as precipitated by print-capitalism, a representative of which is the novel. Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (2006) considers the concept of *simultaneity* as core to nationalism's emergence. First, he emphasizes that there already existed two relevant cultural systems that previously connected communities in many parts of the world: the religious and the dynastic. Classical communities are linked primarily by the sacred languages that serve as the vehicle of religious teaching readily understood by its members regardless of geographical locations. Religious thoughts according to Anderson has the power to lure masses because it contains answers to difficult and painful questions oftentimes met with impatience by progressive schools of thought. This cultural system declined after the Middle Ages because of two reasons: the explorations of the non-European world and the gradual fading away of the sacred language itself (13-16, 18). The second cultural system that linked people was the dynastic realm which was the only imaginable political system in ancient communities. Boundaries within the territories subjected under monarchies were difficult to determine. These territories were often expanded by means of conquest through war or miscegenation. The hold of the dynastic realm loosened during the seventeenth century due to political upheavals that took place in Europe (19-21). Second, Anderson clarifies that the rise of nationalism is not a direct result of the downfall of religious community and dynastic realm and he only

needed to align nationalism with its preceding cultural systems to emphasize a sense of *shift* in apprehending communities (12).[1] Third, he discusses that beyond the decline of the two cultural systems, our way of apprehending the world, especially that of time, was also changing. Apprehending simultaneity is crucial in the imagining of the nation since, in simple terms, in any given calendrical time, a connection among disconnected entities is established thus forming a community of individuals who may not actually see or know each other (22). To illustrate this imagining of the nation, Anderson identifies mediums that *re-present* the kind of community that is imagined: the novel, the newspaper, the map, the census, the museum (163-164). To narrate a singular nation is to gather together scattered fragments to create a coherence of a whole, an image to signify *nationness*. No matter how differentiated and fragmented, the new nation was to become the fulfillment of the desire of postcolonial subjects after their liberation from the colonial powers and is thus an imagination arising from loss towards a restoration of a sense of self. It is an entry to a new temporality that requires a massive reorganization of existing temporalities that are forced to gyrate together, like pinions inside a modern time-piece, only violently, to realize the singular nation-ambition.

To imagine the nation—and the consequent belief in it—is required in every liberation movement. The ways on how nation is imagined legitimizes the subjects' attitudes, aspirations, and actions. Within this imaginary, there is an insisting inertia towards uniformity, wholeness, and sovereignty that must constantly deny and erase what

---

[1] The emphasis on the shift in apprehending communities is my own interpretation of Anderson's need to trace and align nationalism as a modernist emergence *after* old models/cultural systems.

it is that is incommensurable and unassimilable. Duara anchors this imagination in a temporal discourse of the nation in which

> National history secures for the contested and contingent nation the false unity of a self-same, national subject evolving through time. This reified history derives from the linear, teleological model of Enlightenment History—which I designate with a capital H to distinguish it from other modes of figuring the past. It allows the nation-state to see itself as a unique form of community which finds its place in the oppositions between tradition and modernity, hierarchy and equality, empire and nation. Within this schema, the nation appears as the newly realized, sovereign subject of History embodying a moral and political force that has overcome dynasties, aristocracies, and ruling priests and mandarins, who are seen to represent merely themselves historically. In contrast to them, the nation is a collective historical subject poised to realize its destiny in a modern future. *Rescuing History from the Nation* 4

Nationalism and its desire, the nation, are elusive and illusive concepts that occupy moving terrains in the mind. Nationalism is protean in character based on perspective, as in a parallax that is contingent to the position of the observer and the observed, whether geographical, political, or ideological. Nation, by virtue of its ambiguity, vacillates in the mind of the subjects as the nation-state. Essentially rooted on good intentions, nationalism can slide to fascism and imperialism, isolationism, chauvinism, and fuel revolutions to uproot colonial powers. In the postcolonial world, it

brought nation-states into being. But examined in imperial, economic, cultural, and political terms, nationalism crumbles when pitted against the internal dysfunction of the nation-state, whose legitimacy, in the context of the Tricontinent, can be adjudged by examining its complicity to dependency, developmentalism, neocolonialism, and the now tilted spin of global capitalism that led to the messy and unequal divide between the Global North and the Global South, wherever they may be. Nation, when confused with the nation-state, creates false expectations because being part of the (imagined) nation does not always mean being part of the nation-state. Mistaking the nation for the nation-state is to get caught up in an irrational desire because while the nation is fluidly ideal and spiritual, the nation-state is rigidly material and secular. According to Raymond Williams,

> Nation as a term is radically connected with 'natives.' We are *born* into relationships which are typically settled in a place. This form of primary and 'placeable' bonding is of quite fundamental human and natural importance. Yet the jump from that to anything like the modern nation-state is entirely artificial. Brennan 45

In its traditional sense, nation is a marker of belongingness not only in a place but also in a web of relations. This structure of emplacement was bound to change upon contact with coloniality, a disruption of a temporality by another, where displacement is initiated even without the native's movement from space but through cultural and psychical colonial techniques. This negative simultaneity, that is, the gyration of incompatible temporalities, its multiple forms of tensions and violence, would go on within colonialism's longue

durée and prevail even after the revolution for independence. The desire to revive the native's place in place and relations after the so-called liberation necessitated a new temporality that dominated and forcibly flattened the very temporalities of the pre-colonial nations, indeed the basis of that which the postcolonial subject feels *was* lost and which must be brought together but must perpetually lose *it* as the method of possessing it. Built on colonial systems and their aberrant legacies, the modern nation-state in the postcolonial world owes its coming into being from nationalism, and yet the nation-state germinates with a perpetual internal *difference* that makes it not a mere recipient of political, economic, and cultural onslaught. Its dysfunctionality is its own making, its actual structural logic. It is bound to fail as the transaction called independence is a mere transfer of power from the colonizers to the underdeveloped bourgeoisie.

Nationalism cemented its notorious reputation after the second world war due to its relationship with imperialism and its resulting tyranny. Timothy Brennan explains in "The National Longing for Form" that post-war critics had a negative critique on nationalism due to the war it created as a result of the imperialist conquest of superpowers such as Italy that invaded France, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Tunisia, and countries in East Africa; Germany that attacked Poland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Italy and other parts of Europe; and Japan that fought wars against China, USA, United Kingdom (overseas such as Hong Kong and Malaysia) and invaded and looted the entire Southeast Asia (45). According to Kohn and Kedourie, the imperialist tendency stems from nationalism's totalitarian edge, "a state of mind where individuals' loyalty is due to the nation-state" (57). The idea of conquest was necessitated by nationalism at home which

then manifested to tyranny in the world in the form of imperial wars. When nationalism emerged in Europe, it did not have a unified desire until later when the new European superpowers wanted to expand the empire by exploiting other countries all in the name of the nation. “The twentieth century since 1945 has become the first period in history in which the whole of mankind has accepted one and the same political attitude, that of nationalism” (59). Towards this political attitude is the ambivalent feeling of theorists leading to the formulation of nationalism’s dual character in the present world order. In European context, tyranny is born out of nationalism but in the context of the colonized peoples in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, nationalism is essential to achieve freedom from tyranny.[2] Revolutions thus had to be fought. Homi Bhabha commenting on Fanonian violence in *The Wretched of the Earth* explains that revolution is the colonized’s “struggle for psycho-affective survival and a search for human agency in the midst of the agony of oppression” (xxvi). Rage erupting into violence is the effect of dehumanization. For Fanon, violence is a reconstruction of the psyche, a healing of neuroses. This is why the attachment to the postcolonial nation is fierce and enduring because it is fought through revolutions and perpetual formation, both of individual and collective selfhood that persist even after independence. Fanon asserts that by dehumanizing the Other, Europe became a Man. Thus in the mechanics of decolonization, Europe has to become history’s object whose imperialism is always implicated in relation to its nationalism.

---

[2] Brennan is in unison with Anderson that nationalism is rooted in fear and hatred of the other.

On the other end, the inward protective stance of nation-states has a tendency to close its doors from the world. Nationalism has a capacity to deter nation-states from arriving at an international solidarity because if not imperialist, nationalism *can* be isolationist. The assumption that internationalism is conducive for positive capitalism as a prerequisite for global modernization can be approached from two perspectives: the imperialist and the isolationist. Both views occupy two ends of the economic and political sliding scale. First, from the Western perspective, internationalism when met with reactionary sentiments does not foster the necessary network of cooperation that will keep capital flowing. Armand Mattelart proposes the smashing of the concept of nation-state to establish transnational capitalism, an arrangement that is obviously favorable to the West given the economic parameters of the new world order but absolutely unthinkable for thinkers of the nation-states in the Tricontinent who have just been granted independence (Brennan 46). Second, from the perspective of newly independent countries, nationalism tend to be isolationist due to its proximity to the intense moment of revolutionary struggle for liberation and its need to accelerate self-determination in the nation's political, economic, intellectual, and cultural life. The bookended colonialism has lingering effects in these societies thereby accounting for the hostilities to imperialism now in the form of foreign capitalism. In the age of globalization, the newly formed nation-states who are aware of the rapid uneven flow of capital and massive bodies and resources expended for the manufacture of goods insist albeit ineffectually in regulating international transactions to put the *nation* first. Taken to the extreme, we see versions of these hostilities in the form of populist and dictatorial characters of current

governments such as the Philippines, India, Brazil, China, and Trump's US, to name a few.

The battleground of hostilities in the pendulum between imperialism and capitalism is also cultural. Simon During in "Literature: Nationalism's Other" asks an important question: "What is one defending *against* the encroachments of cultural, economic, and military imperialism if not a culture?" (139). Cultural nationalism, the highest form of nationalism, is mobilized to counter imperialism. The problem with this culturalism is that it first fueled the pursuit of nineteenth century Europe for nationhood and how it possessed European imperialism. This led to the structuration of a cultural hierarchy in which Europe sees itself superior. Nation and culture have successfully aligned and thus manifested nationalism's chauvinist character. European nationalism eventually anchored on racial logic in which colonialism and capitalism would operate. However, During refuses the idea that nationalism "is an essentially nasty ideological tradition" (ibid). To him, its pitfall is contextual. Its meaning to nations differ between those who are at the center of world power and those at the margins. Instead of rejecting nationalism, what During calls for is to discriminate between nationalisms, critique how nationalism powers effective political actions and

> accept that in so far as the history of the West is a tale of exploitation of other societies, all European cultural practices are touched by imperialism. Yet nationalism is something other than imperialism writ as large as this. It [nationalism] is quite specifically, the battery of discursive and representational practices which define, legitimate, or valorize a specific

> nation-state or individuals as members of a nation-state. Nationalism attaches to the modern state, revealing itself fully in subjects whose being is saturated by their nationality. 138

This explains why nationalism is indispensable especially to nations/nation-states born in the twentieth century and of subjects who are possessed with the desire to actualize a national self that is free and self-governing. With the liberation of nation-states is the inevitable challenge of self-governance. In contrast to Europe, the fledgling nation-states need nationalism more than ever to complement the constitution that serves as the backbone of the new political structure. Self-rule however takes place in perpetual trial and error. Partha Chatterjee locates the categorical difference between two types of nationalism, that is, the Western and the Eastern, in the act and in the moment of their emergence. In the West, the nation-states operate based on standards of progress that have already been set by France and Britain, the nation-states enjoy a certain level of prosperity, institutions have relatively stabilized and matured while in the East, nation-states are yet to crystallize in the imaginative, cultural, and political life of the people (1-2). The nation-states, emerging and forming anew, ironically become poor imitations of advanced nation-states which have already established strong institutions. This, while still reeling with the hangover from the colonial binge. According to John Plamenatz, "nationalism is primarily a cultural phenomenon although it often takes a political form" (1). This political form, Hans Krohn expresses, is the materialization of the urge to be liberated and the need to progress: the nation-state is the actualization of the desires of nationalism (2). As nations amalgamate to political entities (nation-states), nationalism

grows essentially more in conflict with the colonial legacies and the foreign civilization that is incompatible with the postcolonial subjects' ways of life. The colonized East, unable to operate in the schema of the colonizing West, needed to regenerate a national culture which requires decisive changes from traditions while conscious of the necessity of retaining such traditions to mold a national identity that is strategically distinct from their colonizer. Faced with a hybrid culture and caught in the working standards of progress that have already been set, which would gradually blanket the new world order, where nations concretize into geographic and maritime boundaries to become the perimeter of sovereignties, with patterns and structures of international trade and relations established and solidified, the new nation-state is left without options but to adapt and operate within these standards with hostility. Geoffrey Bennington explains that nation is a differentiation of nations in geographical terms since, citing Edgar Morin, frontiers are both opening and closing of territories. What Bennington is obviously referring here is the geo-political domain of the nation-state. Through a web of external relations, nation-states like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle form other nation-states (121-122). In this new network of nations/nation-states flows capital unevenly between the Global North and the Global South. At the losing end of the uneven narrative of development and modernity, the new nation-state enters an intense moment as it is caught up between its desire to reject the intruder but imitates it in its schema of progress. It stands at the crossroad of retaining aspects of its own culture, both traditional and consequent formations from it, and rejecting them because they get in the way to modernization. This explains why the Eastern nationalism has always been ambivalently violent, tensed, conflicted, and always

veering to the direction of failure. By way of adjusting Chatterjee's binary, I substitute Eastern with Tricontinental to assume, *mutatis mutandis*, a shared nationalist struggle and political aspirations among colonized peoples in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and point out that the East-West binary is clearly a false dichotomy in the present formations of regions and collectives that experience the Global South *as* life, including those nested within Global North and vice versa.

Nationalism despite its power to flare up revolutions in the Tricontinent to counter imperialism and uproot colonialism eventually waned in its appeal as a positive force and, considering the current pattern of dictatorships emerging in these formerly colonized societies, the anxiety over nationalism's negative reputation has proven not baseless even in the tricontinent—from the early stage of revolutions up to the present breakdown of its institutions. The failure of the nation-state as a new order of stratified societies that produce surplus populations and subalterns can be explained through examining the dynamic of the Marxist project of socialism and nationalism's project which is the nation-state. Marxism's philosophy aims for a just and equitable society while nationalism aims for liberation. The anticolonial victory only proved to be a socialist defeat. Nationalist movements heavily operated under socialist influence, an alliance of three stages that started at the Comintern congress in 1928, continued until 1945, and persisted after the second world war that eventually did not come into fruition as the nation-states turned out to be dysfunctional putting the worth of the revolution into question as well as the nationalism behind it. Frantz Fanon implicates the underdeveloped bourgeoisie as

responsible for the failure of the nation-state which contributed to nationalism's unpopularity among theorists (155).

So far I have argued the ambivalence of nationalism in imperial, economic, cultural, and political terms. There is no one way of judging nationalism in the sense that it varies its character depending on context. There are however few things clear for the time being. First, nationalism is characterized by violence. For the colonizer, violence in the form of invasion and conquest. For the colonized, violence in the form of revolution. Second, nation and nationalism are always imbricated. For the imperialist, nation is the basis of nationalism, nationalism is the driving force of imperialism. For the conquered, nationalism is the basis of nation, nation is the founding spirit of the nation-state. The nation-state as an outcome after the liberation in the Tricontinent initially justifies nationalism's necessity for the colonized to assert economic, cultural, and political independence and to finally live its form. However, a final analysis of the nation-state reveals its dysfunction because of two reasons. First, the idealization of the nation is perpetually unmet in its materiality which is the nation-state. Second, the nation-state is perpetually maimed by the circumstances that created it.

The Nation-state and the Neocolony

The totalizing and essentializing view of the nation as a coherent body of homogeneous population and as a consequent positive moment after the revolution bearing with it the promise of liberation from bondage and sense of self-determination exists only liminally. The idealization of the nation as a benevolent force—a predilection of nationalism—conceals the nation-state's anomaly in its complicity with the renewed

catastrophe to the political, cultural, and economic life of postcolonial subjects in the newly-independent countries in the Tricontinent. The nation-state, the most powerful concretization of the nation in the grand narrative of modernity, is a project bound to fail from the beginning. The teleology of colonialism and liberation struggle and the consequent birth of the nation-state also borne out the nation-state's twin: a new trend of subjugation called neocolonialism. After the long colonialism, structures have solidified and institutionalized making it impossible to overthrow the old systems without suffocating the fledgling nation-state. Because the nation-state and neocolonialism are joined by capitalism's umbilical cord, they coexist; but neocolonialism makes nation-state, with *consent*, its lifeblood—a repetition of the sins of the father. Antonio Gramsci thinks that in the context of neocolonialism, physical force is no longer necessary. Hegemony is "established at a cultural, ideological, economic, and political level" (Young 45). Consent is arrived at without being freely given by subjects, that is, consent that is systemically extracted through techniques of governmentality.

The class conflict on the macrolevel and the imbalance of wealth and power among the Global North and the Global South have resulted to the international division of the value of labor and resources. In the postcolonial world, labor, time, resources, and lives are cheap. Development and progress in the First World means maldevelopment and poverty[3] in the Third World. In the neocolonial spectrum of winners and losers, Kwame Nkrumah aptly describes neocolonialism as "power without responsibility, and for those

[3] I suggest that poverty is in fact not the aftermath of the exploitation of capitalism but the mechanics of capitalism to produce wealth. That maintaining the cost of life in the underdeveloped and overexploited world is arbitrary. Poverty is labor, is work, not a lack—but an excess—of capital. It is both capitalism's inevitable condition and bi-product.

who suffer…exploitation without redress" (*Neo-Colonialism* xi, Young 44). Nkrumah envisioned that imperialism, being the "highest stage of capitalism," will only end when nations and peoples will no longer exploit each other ("Society and Ideology" 65) and laments that a nation's history is written very easily by the dominant class (68). For him, colonialism need not have to come from the outside. Capitalism operating within is a form of colonialism, even when it is domestic. Capitalism becomes evil when it alienates "the fruit of labour from those who toil of their body and the sweat of their brow produce this fruit" (74).

The parasitic relationship between nation-state and neocolonialism is marked by an anomaly: the nation-state is a mere stand-in for the premature national bourgeoisie who are recipients of the power transferred during a transaction called independence. Frantz Fanon calls the national bourgeoisie the conveyor belt of capitalism that facilitates and ensures the continuity of economic and commercial activities established by the colonizers (*The Wretched of the Earth* 100). As the new ruling class, they accumulate resources among themselves and turn their back from the proletariat. Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, drawing from Chatterjee, Anderson, and Fanon, discuss how postcolonial nation-states are fueled by bourgeois nationalism which is their means to synchronize with modernity. The historical narrative shifts from liberation to "development that it has been virtually impossible to write the history of alternative modes" (4). Arturo Escobar argues that after World War II, the West has transformed colonialism into a new project of domination on a global scale under the banner of modernization and development. This required that nation-states become conduits for modernity [and capital] to flow. As a

consequence of the nation-states synchronization with the world system, their national bourgeoisie needed to manage populations, engineer cultural forms, and I add, liquidate ecosystems, to keep up with the demands of modernity (7). The nation becomes an enclosed space where the underdeveloped bourgeoisie strengthens old economic systems that keep capital flowing while the proletariat serves as the fodder that maintains the economic systems operating: providing cheap labor, land, and environmental resources. The oligarchs structure a political atmosphere conducive to their capitalist ventures while the poor live in the illusion that their vote is enough to purchase citizenship and belongingness in the national body. The national government develops the metropolis as the nation-state's capital while neglecting the cultural, political, and economic life of the people in the periphery. The state erects megastructures that testify to the nation's power as a truly independent body while destroying habitats and cultures, displacing peoples and disrupting ecosystems in the process. It invites foreign investments and corporations that exploit cheap labor and raw materials and markets them as jobs. The nation-state operates in developmental time creating a violent churning against the time of the masses. As the nation-state closes itself to secure the affluence of the few, it creates more and more surplus population that are shut out from the body politic: urban refuse, subalterns, queer populations, religious minorities, indigenous peoples, trans-border communities. They are the direct casualties of the failure of the nation-state as a modernist project. The nation-state to Hanna Arendt "is a structure that repeatedly expels its minority population" (Coopan 10). The expulsion would not have been so bad if it is absolute, that is, these communities are granted their full autonomy. Instead, they perpetually float

within while being condemned towards the *without*. The sum of this minority population ironically is greater than the nation's majority in statistics. The nation called by Rousseau as a collective personality which is built on "unity and common destiny…whose cohesiveness relied upon forces emanating from the ground up, and which, being natural, encompassed all" (Brennan 52-53) thus remains nationalism's unfulfilled ambition.

Providing leverage for the spectacularly concrete and thus symbolic—yet hollow—construction of the new nation-state, financial institutions such as IMF and World Bank calculate perennially increasing debts incurred by these nation-states to finance national projects in the name of national development. As crises grow severe, these nation-states are no longer able to service even the interest of their debts. Robert Young writes that as debts ballooned in the 1970s, structural adjustments had to be made for underdeveloped countries. The debt restructuring meant external corporate and finance institutions control on

> state-spending, a free market system, a reduction of the role of the state, privatization, encouragement of private commercial investment in the state and social sector, abolition of exchange controls, and the replacement of international aid for state projects by inward investment by multinational corporations together with small-scale social projects run by non-government organizations funded by western charities and foundations. 53

These neoliberal sanctions meant the declogging of capital pathways making the neocolonial operations flow more smoothly: the national upper class accumulates a smaller portion of wealth compared to wealth created and channeled to the First World.

Within the nation-state, the economic gap between the upper class and the lower class widens. Within the globe, the economic gap between the Global North and the Global South widens. In this sense "poverty is not an inert backwardness but the result of the process of capitalist accumulation" (Young 51). Prosperity in one place is impoverishment in another. To further manipulate Third World countries, they are lured into dependency by their First World *ally,* falling into dubious agreements and compromises that put the nation-state's sovereignty into question. Nation-state is not only complicit to neocolonialism, it is also an incomplete and therefore false space of liberation pretending as a legitimate bedrock of self-determination. As the concept of the nation moves farther from its material reality, the nation-state—nationalism's unmet desire—does not only betray its own people but also the nation as its own spirit.

Auto-critiques of Modernity

It is within this premise of disjuncture and betrayal that this dissertation brings together five chapters that confront the nation in its illusion of homogeneity as opposed to its state of incoherence and fragmented, therefore real, form. I maintain that tantamount to the failure of the nation-state is its exclusionary and deracinating effects on the subaltern and indigenous communities whose cultural rhythms, worldview, and indigenous consciousness do not coincide with the modernist and capitalist tempo of the nation-state that desires for development even while its institutions are built on colonial legacies and are thus fundamentally broken. The subaltern in its engagement with modernity is not legible under the nation's developmentalist optics, or if the subaltern is otherwise legible, it is only by being a standing reserve waiting to be exploited and

expended to realize the nation-ambition and a farther moving margin of communities that needs to be folded in the national body, that is yet to synchronize in the twenty-first century. The nation-state as a project of modernity must be re-defined based on its incompleteness making incompleteness the blueprint of its structure that parallels the logic of modernity's incomplete arrival: that modernity should be in a state of constant failure to be able to create a surplus necessary for the accumulation of capital among the few, not the distribution of capital among the many. That modernity as an overarching narrative is not only a singular temporality but in reality a system of multiple temporalities gyrating like pinions that set modernity's clock into motion. These pinions auto-critique the modern nation-state, the actual optics of time which this dissertation underlines. Subalternity, indigeneity, and the Anthropocene are temporalities that the modern nation-state cannot liquidate but must re-configure to open up better possibilities and strategies to enact equitable social and environmental justice.

Modernity via the nation-state is not a temporal singularity in the sense that it demands a constant dialectic to account for its systemic violence, a dialectic which examines and dismantles dominant histories to make way for simultaneous historical narratives that have been delegitimized because they do not serve those in power. Suk-Young Kim confronts the question of authoring history as a unified narrative of the nation which mutes other histories: who is narrating it? whose nation? what agency is there for the people to narrate history? Kim asserts that "researchers need to see through the blunt walls of officially sanctioned narratives and identify the hidden multiple subjects and objects of national imagination" (7-8). Nationalism as a metanarrative dwarfs the

narratives of “smaller others” and sacrifices these narratives because there is a nation that must be unifiedly imagined. In its desire to arrive at the nation-form, the nation, according to Prasenjit Duara, often lack mechanisms to critique itself (8-9). Without these self-critiques, it is easy to overlook the systemic abuse of the rights of oppressed classes, predicated on their undervalued humanity or justifying their expendability for the sake of the nation. For Duara,

> nationalism has been a relational identity. The multiplicity of nation-views and the idea that political identity is not fixed but shifts between different loci introduces the idea that nationalism is best seen as a relational identity. In other words, the nation, even where it is manifestly not a recent invention, is hardly the realization of an original essence, but a historical configuration designed to include certain groups and exclude or marginalize others—often violently…. As a relationship among constituents, the national “self" is defined at any point in time by the Other. Depending on the nature and scale of the oppositional term, the national self contains various smaller “others”—historical others that have effected an often uneasy reconciliation among themselves and potential others that are beginning to form their differences. And it is these potential others that are most deserving of our attention because they reveal the principle that creates nations—the willing into existence of a nation which will choose to privilege its difference and obscure all of the cultural bonds that had tied it to its sociological kin. *Rescuing History* 15

By paying attention to the 'smaller others,' the true structure of the nation-state is exposed which is necessary to correct the prevailing nation-imagination. The loci of these smaller others are the auto-critiques of the nation-form—auto-critiques that function as an *outside-within* and effectively expand, shape-shift, and dismantle a monolithic nation and re-form it through alternative imaginings.

The peripheries of the peripheries as the last sites of contradictions and contestations reveal the unsustainability of the desire for progress and hijack the center to relocate the discourse to the margins. Centrifugally, the periphery becomes the defining structure of the center, becomes the new center, for there is no center without its margins. Dipesh Chakrabarty refers to this auto-critique as a "Derridean trace of something that cannot be enclosed, an element that constantly challenges from within capital's and commodity's—and, by implication History's—claims to unity and universality" (55). Subalternity is the limit of History, and by implication, of the nation-state. This limitation however must be constantly imagined not in a spatial horizontal figuration but as a formation within encirculations to emphasize the act of encompassing and yet not totally ingesting because of the incommensurability and multiplicity of temporalities in the *within*. To speak of the subaltern is to inevitably speak of capital that has reorganized spaces and populations within nation-states (57). The subaltern is the perpetual fracture and breach of the nation-form, and, borrowing from Trinh T. Minh-ha, the "marginality [that] is the condition of the center" (18). And yet, in order to be truly decolonial, this dissertation does not insist on assimilation and integration because both efface and homogenize; the result of such mechanisms is exclusion. By insisting to stay on the outside-within, the nation-form is in perpetual shape-shifting aporia where subjects create

opening breathing spaces for themselves to end the long suffocation caused by the nation-state's enclosure.

By insisting on the polytemporality of the nation-state, staying true to its simultaneous coming together of incoherences, modernity is not a self-constitution but is mere co-constitutive. Modernity does not merely enact its effects on the marginalized but the marginalized engages and meets modernity's effects and in turn effects simultaneous modernities. As a case in point, Reynaldo Ileto, in his study of the formations of banditry and illicit associations simultaneously emerging with the founding of the Philippine Republic at the closing of the nineteenth century, points out how the margins did not unidirectionally receive the effects of governmentality but actively shaped such governmentality. Ileto explains that the Filipino is fundamentally developmentalist as a consequence of a linear history taught in the Philippine educational system which started with the *ilustrados* or the elites during the Spanish colonization who were exposed to the "progressive ideas of history" and acquired strongly the "Christian constructs" of "Fall" and "Recovery" in their perspective of the Philippine past. The ilustrados subscribed to Enlightenment and Reason, that is, possessing the intellectual mode that imagined the future of a nationhood after liberation from Spain (100-101). This vision was carried over by the dictator Ferdinand Marcos in the 1960s and 1970s and used it in justifying the constitutional authoritarianism of his government to *steer* the Philippine nation into progress (103). This dominance of the ilustrados manifested geographically by naturally becoming situated in the pueblo, the center and site of progress where the *principalia* or the ruling noble class was—the prototype of the nation-state, so to say. The ilustrados, likely the version of Fanon's underdeveloped bourgeoisie, were caught up with the

developmental model by consolidating state power as a natural sequence after the revolution for independence mainly because they were to become the front liners and movers in the process of development, the end of which is the attainment of a progressive nationhood.

To allow the developmental model to operate, history had to become History in the sense that what gets told and written is dictated by power: other narratives needed to be suppressed and framed as problems and aberrations.[4] Ileto highlights how banditry and illicit associations are formations arising from the suppression of the Other, "the condition for the possibility, of the pueblo center" (115). For example, banditry framed as a problem powerfully shaped pueblo life precisely because the government's preoccupation of it led to the reorganization of police networks, systematization of documents, streamlining of the judicial system, and management of population settlements (116). Illicit associations formed coalitions and sometimes armed resistance that "refused to be processed by the state" (120). In short, these counter formations from the periphery threatened, influenced, and organized the behavior of the center (121). Despite these aberrations, the First Philippine Republic of 1898-1901 was established and marked the crowning achievement of the aspirations of the ilustrado (123). The ilustrados

---

[4] Ileto discusses "banditry," a series of activities of outlaws, in the second half of the nineteenth century (116) and "illicit associations," the springing up of religious movements in the archipelago, "aberrations" of Roman Catholicism which was the dominant religion. The ilustrados often called these associations "primitive," 'proto-nationalist," "nativist," "fanatical," "religious," "millenaraian," and "irrational" (119). In another context, Gladys Nubla claims that Muslim subjects were also denied recognition by refusing to incorporate the Muslim south in the then new republic, writing that "while Muslims in the Philippines have a long-standing, often venerated history of violent resistance against Spanish and U.S. colonizers who desired to take control over their lands, their feelings of national unbelonging to the Philippines were rooted in the "failure of the [1898 Philippine] revolution to incorporate the Muslim south" and further solidified during the U.S. colonial period and the Philippine Commonwealth period (1935-46), when President Manuel L. Quezon denied the "special provinces" of Muslims and Indigenous Peoples full suffrage and equal representation in the Filipino-run government" (396).

succeeded in legitimizing the Filipino national unit based on the anti-imperial nationalist sentiments against the Spaniards and later against the Americans (Reid 25). However, the newly-formed republic was to repeat the marginalizing structure of the Spaniards towards the natives before they received their independence (Ileto 125). This was to become the genealogy of the model of the Philippine state wherein, as part of its possibility, the counter-formations were called as problems because their legibility fell outside the developmental lens. Ethnic societies outside the center had to transform, in a sense, to a homogenous identity—that is, *becoming* Filipino as a result of the establishment of the modernizing nation-form. To be labeled Filipino is to be pronounced a national subject. It is within this dynamic that the subaltern, suspended as remainder societies, persisting against being processed for entry in becoming Filipino, and thus framed as problems, effectively structurally become the auto-critique of the nation-state. The subversion of alternative histories strikes at the developmental model of the nation-state; the recovery, re-interrogation, and re-inscription problematize development more honestly. And yet we learn that developmentalism, by its essence asymptotic, is self-defeating. By failing to recognize the anachronistic, the archaic, the irrational cultures, developmentalism will continue to flatten those cultures and impose the violence necessary to homogenize them. However, the very moment developmentalism chooses to recognize those cultures and honor that recognition by changing its methods of enactment, it ceases to be developmental it has become something else. This is the conundrum of modernity.

To veer away from developmental time is to reverse the movement of the subaltern from History to history. Duara explains that independence movements were the process for nation-states to emerge out of non-nations but this momentum of emergence

or conversion was not ably contained by the imperialism of the West, that is, the lengthening road of modernity became disjuncted when met with subaltern formations that resist and insist. Furthermore, the entrance of nation-states into History, which is a Western configuration that was to become the basis of world-system, marked the intensifying of conflicting temporalities within the nation-states. Nation-states are left without choice but to commit to History since modernity has become its telos (*Rescuing History* 27). The subaltern is left without choice but to stand as nation's final and worst critic as the uncontainability of the momentum of conversion created conflicts and cracks —which include formation, continuity, and breakdown—of the national subject as a concept that must be problematized. The historical subject is always hinged on the national subject for one cannot be a national subject without first being historicized, that is, temporalized in the linear developmental time of the nation and spatialized within the geopolitical sovereignty of the nation-state. The subaltern, to become a national subject, must become a historical subject which requires a transition from an Other-temporality to the temporality of the nation-state. For subalternity is a mode that is *outside-within* History, its limits, and therefore modernity's ultimate internal difference. This process of transition undergoes the violence of sublation and must therefore be interrogated to identify the loci of violence and injustice. The Other is not a mere site of otherness or a horizon that must be stabilized or framed or analyzed but an articulator both of itself and the nation-state that it interpellates. The Other is its own space. Its own time. The models of auto-critique this dissertation proposes strive to intervene for the non-sublation of the subaltern into History, into nation, into the dominant knowledge-systems. It secures a

space for the Other systems as equal, coeval, contemporary, and co-existent with modernity.

If nation is an imagination, these auto-critiques that use contemporary independent films in the Philippines as both theories and texts are re-imaginations that contest prevailing ways in which the nation is apprehended, negotiated, and arrived at—resonating with Prasenjit Duara's claim that

> …nationalism is rarely the nationalism of the nation, but rather marks the site where different representations of the nation contest and negotiate with each other….nationalist consciousness is not, by itself, a unique and unprecedented mode or form of consciousness. Although nationalism and its theory seek a privileged position within the representational network as the master identity that subsumes or organizes other identifications, it exists only as one among others and is changeable, interchangeable, conflicted, or harmonious with them. *Rescuing History from the Nation* 8

By insisting on temporalities instead of spatialities and corporealities, the nation ceases being only locative or geopolitical, statistical or censual, which sets a rigid imposition of unitary national sovereignty but assumes a *plurality,* a sense of dynamism and becoming based on the mobilities, negotiations, and processes enacted by the sovereignties of the Other, that is, the trellis of the counter-imagination of the nation is built from multiple subaltern temporalities instead of national geographical-temporal-bodily coordinates. Land-based sovereignties fixated on native soil fundamentally enclose and suffocate

while sovereignties based on time acknowledge cultural simultaneities which open and set free subjects who continually resist the nation-state as a liquidating force.

That the nation-state is in its last stage of viability in the present world order is not a new claim. Arjun Appadurai, speaking about the disjunctures of modernity, claims that the nation-state could no longer hold as the arbiter between modernity and globality as the preoccupation of the postcolonial subject has moved from nationality to globality given new techniques, mediums of imaginings, and mobilities (4, 19). Saturated by images, imagination has "become part of the quotidian mental work of ordinary people in many societies" (5). Imaginations that are not only formations but breakdowns and re-formations, including new forms in which nation can now be differently imagined. This places the nation-state as a sociological unit of analysis in a state of crisis, in a sense cannibalizing-and-cannibalized-by the nation as the gap between materiality and imagination widens. For worlding does not only involve material or concrete realities but also how collectives imagine or dream that world (Appadurai 6-10). With new imaginations come new possibilities, new legitimations of what counts as a sense of belonging, sharper critiques to *govern-mentalities*, that is, refusing to subscribe to abusive techniques of the nation-state by first reorganizing one's imagination of and relation to it.

With the current mismanagement of the pandemic, rapid industrialization, cheap labor, drug war, populism and dictatorship, human rights abuses, systemic displacement of indigenous peoples through killings, destruction of Lumad schools, land conversion and grabbing, and the increasing vulnerabilities to catastrophic effects of changing

climate in the Philippines, it is crucial to show how these images are being imagined, shaped, and consumed. Central to my project is locating the figure of the subaltern in the midst of these issues within a nation that is responsible for their subjection. It challenges the national imaginary by making space for underrepresented populations that continue to persist and make themselves legible. It contributes to scholarship in Southeast Asia independent cinema as an intense site of visual construction and production that shapes and comments on its geopolitical position and problems. Important major works of scholarship on Southeast Asian cinema focus on the emergence of independent films as a result of access to digital technology and the fresh alternative practices of new generations of filmmakers[5] as well as looking at aesthetics, circulation through film festivals, and government and institutional powers that shape production and distribution.[6] My study by employing textual analysis examines precisely what goes on in these films rather than simply describe the conditions of their production, distribution, and consumption. As a scholarship on globalization and cinema, my dissertation not only situates the films as artistic products in the international circuit but also zeroes in on the politics of marginalized populations that the films construct. A novel contribution to the field of environmental justice films, my study charts for the first time the urgency to establish ecocinema as a critical framework that needs to develop in the Philippines—an ecocinema that places at the forefront marginalized communities and their precarious conditions due to environmental crises.

---

[5] See Baumgartel, Tilman, editor. *Southeast Asia Independent Cinema,* Hong Kong University Press, 2012.

[6] See Ingawanij, May Adadol and Benjamin McKay, editors. *Glimpses of Freedom: Independent Cinema in Southeast Asia,* Cornell University Press, 2012.

The next four chapters are each anchored on the auto-critique of the nation-form: *persistence*, *autonomy*, *fluidity*, and *transcendence*—optics and thematics that move through an expanding and shape-shifting aporia. Though each chapter can be read independently, together they can be read as explorations of the auto-critical models that I propose, like recurring motifs that mirror each other, only slightly different each time. I derive critical frameworks from the films and attend to cultural and geopolitical specificities that shape and inform them. As an important note, my dissertation examines a narrow body of films by Lav Diaz and Brillante Mendoza, key independent contemporary filmmakers from the Philippines who have gained prominence in the world's major film festivals. Independent filmmaking in the Philippines primarily means producing film outside the country's major studios and not being distributed and exhibited in mainstream movie houses. Source of funding comes from the filmmakers themselves, or through small grants from the government and private sectors, as well as international film granting organizations. As a result, filmmakers exercise considerable control in aesthetics, approach, themes, and employment of (non)actors and crew. Though I do not veer away from looking at these films as artistic products, I acknowledge that I do not analyze the films in an auteuristic framework to highlight the politics of aesthetics in the film. Diaz and Mendoza have been regarded as auteurs in international film festivals and part of the intervention of this dissertation is to deepen the conversation on the cultural labor and capital that is involved in the filmmaking from a local instead of an international perspective. Conversely, I am more interested in what is at stake for the

populations and their situations that are being represented and constructed as cultural products in the films.

Diaz and Mendoza are outsiders to the cultures that their films represent and yet their visions of these cultures are effectively validated in the global film market through the important awards they have reaped over the years, an Orientalist mechanics that necessitates the examination of how they imagine the subaltern to interpellate the nation —instead of the opposite—which consistently figure in the films I examine. The nation comes as an absent given, interpellated by mere allusion, a sinister that is downplayed through a signifying practice called the metropolitan or *national unconscious*.[7] The national unconscious is the inertia or tendency of framing subaltern or indigenous subjects as always already marginal in relation to the nation as their center.

I do not offer a comprehensive survey of Philippine cinema but take certain films that elucidate the models of auto-critiques that I am developing. I pay attention to specific films that tackle the interrelationship of indigeneity and environmental justice to push the urgent agenda of calling out the accelerated and systemic state-sanctioned violence on Philippine indigenous communities and the destruction and expropriation of their ancestral domains. I show that these films offer alternative frameworks on subalterns' negotiations with the nation to create a space for persisting life ways, belief systems, cyclical rhythms, sustainability of ecosystems, and the recognition of new subjectivities caused by climate trauma. This study addresses the gap in theories on ecocinema that are heavily Western, contributes to debates in film studies such as the aesthetics and politics

[7] I owe this concept from my supervisor, Dr. Sangita Gopal.

of the long take and the cinema of resistance, tackles the sensitive ethics of visual representation of indigenous subjects, and re-theorizes the postcolonial nation more than a century after Philippine independence. As an important note, I use the term subaltern generally to refer to marginalized and disenfranchised populations whether they are indigenous or not, such as the urban refuse and climate subalterns. Moreover, deriving from Gramsci's concept of subalternity, I retain the idea that subalternity is a mode of power dynamics, that is, it is the result of contact with mechanics of domination and oppression. This way, subalternity is not an essence but a resulting consequence of regimes and phenomena that subaltern*ize* and therefore a zone of power which one may inhabit or not. The term indigenous refers to self-identifying Philippine ethnic categories or identities and may not always carry this subaltern connotation. Though the terms subaltern and indigenous do not mean the same thing, both terms are used interchangeably in some parts of the dissertation as long as their discursive contexts allow.

Persistence interrogates the nation-form as a force of death when imagined as closed, unified, and homogenous. The nation-form in its insistence of homogeneity ingests the persisting subaltern body when it refuses to open a space for different temporalities that are simultaneous with the linear time of modernity. This chapter, titled "'Force of Death': The Long Take as the Nation-Form in the Cinema of Lav Diaz" examines the long take as an aesthetic signature of Diaz and situates him as a filmmaker of third cinema. I read the Diaz shot as the nation-form which forwards two political critiques. First, the extreme duration of the Diaz shot interrogates the imperialism of

mainstream cinema and its debilitating effects by employing "dead time." Dead time creates restlessness on the spectator and a reflexivity that disrupts absorption to enable critical spectatorship. Second, the Diaz shot is isomorphic with the Philippine postcolonial society in its triadic structure of space, time, and body. Theorizing from the film *Mula sa Kung Ano Ang Noon/From What Is Before* (2014), I describe the shot as a structural unit of environment or nation-space, duration or national temporality, laboring bodies or subaltern subjects in the state of bare life. I wish to illustrate in this chapter the sustained violence of a singular temporality of the rigid nation-state to subaltern bodies so I may be able to show its aporia in the chapters that proceed. An important concept I propose in this chapter is the term *polytemporality* which refers to the visibility of time that slow cinema is capable of enacting towards the spectator. Polytemporality reveals the spectator's body as a result of their consciousness of duration which in turn allows an ethical and critical encounter with subalternity.

Autonomy asserts an inner sovereignty of land-based indigenous peoples within the geo-political power of the nation-state. This chapter emphasizes that integration through accordance of rights and protection of indigenous peoples must always be critical to attend to their constant cultural formations and negotiations that rest not on the *denial* of difference but rather on the *insistence* of and respect for difference. The nation-form must recognize simultaneous sovereignties within where indigenous communities are free to inhabit the nation-space while maintaining the autonomy to govern themselves. Titled "Black Bodies, White Earth, Re-Mapping a Post-Eruption Landscape Toward an Ecocinema of the Philippines," this chapter aims to establish *Manoro* (2006) by Brillante

Mendoza as an environmental justice ecofilm that brings together environmental, racial, and indigenous issues and calls for the scholarly recognition and circulation of ecocinema as a genre in Philippine cinema.[8] The eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991 displaced some 10,000 Aetas, an indigenous group of Asiatic pygmies that inhabits the vicinity of the volcano in Zambales, Philippines. When the Aetas returned to their ancestral domains, the lowlanders have crept into their land and transformed portions of it to ranches, resorts, and private properties. The displacement of the Aetas resulted to complex psychological, socio-cultural, economic, agrarian and political tensions that the Aetas face to this day. *Manoro* captures these crises by visualizing the interiority of a new Aeta through the now colonized post-eruption landscape in Mount Pinatubo. However, I ask in this chapter how the radical aesthetics of the film can get in the way in its advocacy to bring awareness and inspire the audience to action.

Fluidity challenges the optics of the nation-state in recognizing indigeneity that is anchored on water-based forms of being and becoming. I propose the concept littoral sovereignty which calls for an understanding of territoriality and domains beyond land to acknowledge the fluid ways in which indigenous peoples who live on water maintain cultural, economic, and political sovereignty over the littoral zones and the seas of Southeast Asia which they navigate as their life-giving cosmos. "Anchored on Water, Floating on Land: Littoral Sovereignty of the Badjao, Sea Gypsies of Southeast Asia"

---

[8] I clarify that my use of the term genre is not to be taken in the popular sense of the word but as an analytic category. Unlike genres such a rom-coms, horror, or action movies, I do not place ecocinema within mainstream context where there is a massive following or audience relationship that lead to formulaic ways of filmmaking. Instead, I forward ecocinema as a critical genre to scholars of Philippine cinema, teachers and students, and other stakeholders who benefit from the pedagogical and activist agenda of this body of films.

reads the barren body of Shaleha, a Badjao woman, as a social body with a powerful life-giving force. Her capacity in ensuring the future of the Badjao is not dependent on physiology but on her agency emanating from her desire as a free subject. As a midwife and community elder, Shaleha functions as the gatekeeper of life and keeper of the vitality of socio-cultural practices that allow the Badjao to culturally reproduce itself and maintain its autonomy outside national sovereignty. In this chapter, I problematize Shaleha's extreme abjection as the ultimate enactment of self-sovereignty and agency. I take the risk of writing this chapter as autoethnography—to implicate my own subject position and relation to my subject matter, to emphasize that my optics has its own problems: my claim as a former subaltern does not necessarily provide me an authentic voice to write for and in behalf of Philippine subalterns. The anthropological vein in my study of alterity brings with it complex ethical wrangles such as the inherent denial of coevalness of subjects and the inescapable fact that film is always already an objectifying tool.

Transcendence refers to the rupture that is necessary for the nation-state to embrace as the nation-form can no longer hold from the inside but also from the outside. While persistence, autonomy, and fluidity are auto-critiques that are internally located, transcendence is an auto-critique from the outside—larger and beyond the nation-state and does not recognize its bio-and-necro-political power. Catastrophes in the Anthropocene such as megastorms are unbounded by nations' sovereignties and have the power to create ahistorical subjects which I term as climate subalterns through a scalar trauma that disrupts the temporality of national subjects and reorganizes it to a new

temporality built around that trauma as its new point of reference. To address the challenges of the Anthropocene, the nation-state must break down further to forge alliances and address the collective destinies of the global community and requires an imagination different from the national model in the sense that it opens a space for catastrophic contingencies that further liquidate communities and ecosystems without absolving the nation-states' complicity as actors. In this chapter I emphasize that modern capitalism has manufactured not only deterittorialized patterns of exploitations but also left out a trail of unimaginable vulnerabilities, which are often not underlined when scholars problematize the Anthropocene. Optics have only been on the constant lookout for destruction but less cognizant of which regions of the world have at present become most vulnerable to catastrophes, regions that are at the receiving end of the deracinating effects of destruction and vulnerability, combined and compounded. Reading and theorizing from Diaz's *Storm Children* (2014), I approach the Anthropocene through the lens of power differentials: who creates the vulnerabilities, who holds the power that accelerated and realized the Anthropocene, who are made vulnerable because of it? I read the film as an installation which transfixes the spectator through radical aesthetics in the new geographical coordinates of the trauma field. While the anxiety is real in most places, what is feared is already taking place in other regions, revealing the temporalities of disaster, accelerating as a result of the uneven and incomplete arrival of modernity—delayed by capitalism's intense and relentless use of resources, its deterritorializng character, and its accumulation which can only be made possible through delay and difference, meaning, the withholding of what is due to—and the expending of—the

Other. This is how the Anthropocene, while a cartography of vulnerable regions, is a temporality set into motion by human power whose end is human extinction, uneven and non-uniform as a process of death, a massive scale of environmental and racial injustice.

CHAPTER II

'FORCE OF DEATH': THE LONG TAKE AS THE NATION-FORM IN THE CINEMA OF LAV DIAZ

Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon/From What Is Before (2014), the Locarno top prize winning film of Lav Diaz, opens with a sequence that establishes the basic stylistic formula of his shot: use of single camera, extreme long take, open wide spaces, laboring bodies. First shot: a tiny hut stands in the middle of a rice field, the mountain ranges serve as its backdrop, some trees in the foreground are almost still. It is raining and a dark sky is above the village. An overlaid text appears: Pilipinas 1970. Second shot: a long shot of thick palm fronds and plantain leaves that sway with the wind and a small boy, whose name we will later know as Hakob, emerges from the thicket with a huge load of bananas on his shoulder. He walks forward to the camera and leaves the shot (Figure 2). Third shot: Hakob, this time smaller in an extreme long shot of a field, carries the banana from the background most part of the frame and we wait until his figure grows larger as he gets nearer in front of the camera.The only sound we hear is the strong gust of wind. He puts down the banana, sits on the ground for a while, and we hear a narration of a grown man:

> This story came from a memory.
> This is based from real-life events.
> The characters in this story are based from real people.

Fourth shot: an entire mountain. A figure of a dot moves through a winding path going down. It takes several seconds to recognize the dot is a woman holding something on her head as her figure appears larger by approaching the camera. We wait until we see this

old woman passes by the camera and leaves it *empty* (Figure 3). These four shots take more than five minutes.

Figure 2. Hakob, emerging from the thicket; *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* (2014) by Lav Diaz

Figure 3. Old vendor Babu, starting out like dot in a hill; *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* (2014) by Lav Diaz

It is no surprise to read a comment from a seemingly aesthetically aware film viewer at the Los Angeles Public Library that "I get it, I mean I get that it's not a film for me in execution…not every hill is worth a 5 minutes shot…editing is a great tool" (Barbara, *Kanopy*). On a different occasion, after watching another Diaz film *Norte: Hangganan ng Kasaysayan* (2013), a friend told me how anxious he was while watching the film. Unaccustomed to slow cinema, my friend was hesitant in accepting my invitation to a block screening organized by a few cinephiles in my hometown in Southern Philippines. Perhaps, with some stiff-arming, the film was brought along with captive spectators who were not ready for the film. The questions were unanimous: why the long takes?

I argue in this chapter that the long take, which I call the Diaz shot, is not only his aesthetic signature but also his ideological position as a filmmaker of third cinema—the Diaz shot is a cell where the nation-form is coded. His method executes an imagination of a nation still intoxicated with the dream of unifying disparate temporalities which could not quite synchronized with the tempo of the state. While I argue that the Diaz shot is a configuration of the nation-form, I problematize how this very nation-form is the structural logic of exclusion in the sense that it paradoxically ingests the subaltern body as an element that is incompatible with the space-time of the Philippine nation. The ideology of the Diaz shot has two dimensions: one, the extreme duration of the shot is Diaz's conviction to counter the imperialism of mainstream cinema and its debilitating effects, employing "dead time" which creates restlessness on the modern audience and, as a result, a reflexivity necessary to disrupt absorption thus give birth to a new spectator: one that asks questions, one who thinks; two, the Diaz shot is a political commentary on

Philippine postcolonial society which can be understood by examining the triadic structure of space, time, and body. I present an anatomy of the shot as a unitary system of the spatial, temporal, and corporeal elements that it contains: environment or the physical universe of the shot, duration and progression of actions taking place within this universe, characters or the laboring bodies in the state of bare life. I expand the possibility of the long take from the narrowly held study of time or duration towards a study of space and bodies within this unitary system. Anchoring on *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* as a representative film for analysis,[9] a film that best exemplifies my reading for the clarity of the Diaz's shot formula and whose setting represents an enclosed space of a subaltern community left out by modernization, I assert that the nation-form is isomorphic in the Diaz shot as a dynamic cell: the DNA that ensures the immanence of the nation-state, culture, and people. Identifying the rigid imposition of this false unity enables me to articulate the subaltern body—perpetually expiring and expending but persisting within this configuration: an auto-critique of modernity—in its engagement with the nation-state.

Existing works of scholarship on the films of Diaz, while primarily focusing on the study of time, provide compelling readings that discuss the intricate connection between time and space, looking into the function of time, specifically of the long take, as in fact a framework of space. Using Bazinian approach to engage with the notion of photographic reality, Mendizabal examines the opening of three films *Heremias (Book One: The Legend of the Lizard Princess)* (2005), *Death in the Land of the Encantos*

[9] At the time of this writing, Diaz has already produced *Seasons of the Devil* (2018) and *Ang Hupa* (2019), two features that deviate significantly from his long-take method.

(2007) and *Florentina Hubaldo, CTE* (2013).[10] Mendizabal mentions, though in passing, that the long take of Diaz, beyond style, does have "ideological, figural, philosophical, and genealogical forces" (2) that reflect his philosophical exploration (4) and thus adds nuance to Bazin's theory of cinematic reality. Mendizabal observes that the long take facilitates the 'molding' of the Bazinian space in Diaz's opening of his three films where extreme duration offers a kind of *opening* (7) somewhat akin to what Deleuze describes about floating images in neorealist cinema.[11] In Mendizabal's longer work, he emphasizes that Diaz's post-*Batang West Side* cinema, meaning his works made after the 2001 five-hour film *Batang West Side*, has a constitution of time that disengages with the singularity or primacy of arborescent time and/or homogenous time but is generative of time itself that is multiple and different (7).[12] In another paper, Mendizabal comments on the heavily criticized[13] repetitive style of Diaz's post-*Batang West Side* films as forms of political critiques on the Marcos era, echoing a summative critique of Rolando Tolentino that Diaz's cinema provides an intense engagement with this dark period in Philippine history (2-3). Mendizabal asserts that a discourse back to time is important in establishing that the temporal dimension in Diaz's cinema is not a mere matter of form but a socially significant critique to temporality (3). Time, in a dissertation by Pujita Gupta, takes an ecocoritical turn towards the Anthropocene as she proposes that the films of Diaz create

---

[10] Mendizabal, Adrian: "Three Opening Scenes of Lav Diaz."

[11] The reference to Deleuze is mine.

[12] Mendizabal, Adrian: "The Constitution of Time in Lav Diaz's Cinema"

[13] Mendizabal responds to Adrian Martin's criticism on Diaz's film *Norte* in *Sight and Sound* that Diaz's formula has hardened and that his "lack of inventiveness and craft" is hardly excusable ("The Constitution of Time in Lav Diaz's Cinema" 1).

an "awareness of the natural world" (xv). Gupta claims that though the films of Diaz show the rustic, the rural, or an environment that is *untouched*,[14] it is rife with entanglements of lives, experiences, and spaces that are transformed due to political, as such man-made, forces.

In an attempt to draw a broad observation based on Diaz's *Melancholia* (2008), William Brown analyses the stylistic dimension of Diaz's long take and explains how time is controlled by space. Brown makes a clear distinction that the films of Diaz are not slow only because they are long since "duration is not necessarily the issue when we compare slow cinema, including the slow cinema of Lav Diaz, to other, 'faster' audiovisual products. For a film to be slow, it need not be long but it must, on the whole, reject many of the tropes of conventional mainstream cinema—both that from Hollywood and the rest of the world" (113).[15] Brown observes that every scene is shot in a single take and close ups are minimal to sever the audience from interiorities of characters and instead develop an emotional engagement with events (ibid). Digital filmmaking has enabled Diaz to be uncompromising with these long takes, an otherwise costly decision if he were to film with celluloid (114). Diaz's long take is controlled by space as suggested by Rolando Tolentino: "the present as a juncture for social realities" where actions unfold in their own pace rather than the rapid pace of production or modernity. Brown further accentuates this primacy of space by highlighting that time in Diaz is uniquely Filipino because it gives duration to spaces outside Manila, away from the economic and political

[14] Italics mine; I suggest that the spaces in Diaz's films, rather than untouched, are produced by negative experience with modernity.

[15] Brown counts only 149 shots in *Melancholia*, a film of 450 minutes (113).

center which challenges the national spatial imaginary through mise-en-scene and location shooting (117).

The space-time relation in the films of Diaz is further explored in the works of Nadin Mai who reads the space in Diaz as a concentrationary universe due to its similarities with concentration camps in terms of suffering and delay of death.[16] "Diaz creates conditions of fear, angst, torment and paranoia for the character as well as for the viewer." Within this universe, death is slow and characters suffer to an unbearable degree. In Mai's analysis of *Melancholia, Death in the Land of the Encantos*, and *Florentina Hubaldo, CTE*, it is not death which serves as the primary negation of life but the denial of death, its prolonged un-granting, which transforms dead time, a stylistic hallmark of slow cinema, to death time. In Mai's dissertation, she claims that trauma in Diaz does not come as an event but a larger unfolding condition that necessitates duration. This is where Diaz's slow aesthetics enters into the postcolonial discourse where narrative space is a space of "trauma's latency period, the depletion of a survivor's resources, and a character's slow psychological breakdown" (5). Unlike the conventional flashbacks and interruptions that are commonly found in trauma films, Diaz's films move without those tropes and instead show what happens to subjects living in/with trauma in the present.

Reading *Century of Birthing*, *Evolution of a Filipino Family*, and *From What is Before*, Marco Grosoli tackles the philosophical and postcolonial by referencing Diaz's style as anchored on pre-colonial Malay sense of space rather than time which in effect confronts western metaphysics of time and in consequence traces the logic of colonial

[16] Mai: "The concentrationary universe in the films of Lav Diaz."

domination (309). Interestingly, Grazoli comments that Diaz's cinema is action-based: the camera, when it moves, follows the characters, involving a choreography between camera, object, and movement (310). This commentary is important to my study of bodies in the Diaz shot since it invokes the careful rhythm or pattern in the way bodies and objects behave in front of the camera. Grosoli observes that "pace is carefully organized, and so is mise-en-scene, the staging of bodies, and objects in space. There is no shortage of beginning-middle-end structures, yet they are not constrained by any rigidly dramaturgic scheme. They are just left to unfold according to a time of their own" (310). For Grosoli, space is the framework of the Diaz shot.

Moving the conversation from oft-repeated notions of time and space, my present study introduces and highlights a crucial element—the body—and establishes a mode of analysis that underlines the Diaz shot as a nation-form through the relationship of space, time, and body. Furthermore, it seeks to re-ignite the potency of Third Cinema fifty years hence its conception by positioning Diaz as a filmmaker of third cinema, a genealogy that is crucial to trace if one were to emphasize the many layers of resistance in the cinema of Diaz. Sara Saljoughi reminds that Solanas and Getino had a vision of openness for Third Cinema as a theory. The changes in the essay made by Solanas and Getino over the years is evidence of their investment to Third Cinema as a theory that is evolving (Buchsbaum, cited in Saljoughi). Their shift from cinema of intervention to cinema of action which links Third Cinema to militant cinema is open and "devoid of rigid formulas." The problem was that Third Cinema, dwarfed by Film Studies as a mere category of cinema, "never surpassed its objectdom." Thus the need for Third Cinema as an object to shift to

third cinema as a mode of thought ("Third Cinema Now"). This study reinstates the critical arsenal of Third Cinema as it acknowledges the *longue duree* that is not only spatio-temporal but also corporeal, that is, the capture of laboring subaltern bodies within the rigid postcolonial nation-form.

Diaz as a Third Cinema Filmmaker

With the established use of the long take by Hollywood and Art Cinema along with Diaz's critical validation as an auteur through international festivals, it is convenient to place the shot of Diaz within aesthetic category similar to previous early ideas of Astruc and Bazin that largely focused on the long take as a formal exploration. However, Third Cinema—in relation to First or Hollywood Cinema which dominates the global film market and Second Cinema which originally referred to films of the French New Wave, Japanese New Wave and by large, the cinema of Europe—has a component of resistance and revolution that fuels the ideology and aesthetics of the films from newly formed postcolonial nation-states in Asia, Latin America, and Africa in the 1960s.

Echoing Astruc, Henderson points out that the duration of the long take is necessary for the expression of the image via mise-en-scene. Without interruption, the image develops and makes mise-en-scene possible. The long take is "the time necessary for mise-en-scene space" (315). For Bazin, the long take provides what he calls temporal realism which translates to the actual duration of an event.[17] For example, Bazin observes

[17] In chapter five, I problematize the extreme long take as "the cut" or anti-suture in Brechtian sense. The montage of Eisenstein which used to be revolutionary and manipulative as such has now become the language of mainstream cinema. In contrast to the Soviet montage, the Bazinian long take that realizes photographic realism which was deemed somehow lazy by virtue of its mere mechanical recording would eventually become the radical aesthetics in relation to the rapid and invisibility editing of mainstream cinema.

that Murnau is not concerned with dramatic time but in revealing deeper structures of reality that are already present in the drama instead of using mise-en-scene to advance modes or themes or ideas.

The long take is also read in combination with inter-sequence cuts, a mode of coded cutting that bears a specific relationship with the long take. The long take within a sequence is integral and crucial to the sequence structure whose logic encompasses the timing of the cut or editing at a given point. Zachary Cheney concluded in his dissertation called *Stylish Politics* (2019) that the long take as shot as unit does not always exclusively draw attention to itself because oftentimes it is a conduit of many other cinematic expressions which requires attention to how complex relations can be organized around it (162). Its cutting and relationship with other sequences can be arbitrary. Once again, in Murnau, Astruc comments that cuts simply serve as ending of an image that is succeeded by the next while Bazin notes that the editing of Murnau functions merely to link different scenes and spaces and thus does not purposively use editing techniques for expressive ends (Henderson 316). The use of long take is unsettled in as far as other directors are concerned. They vary in their combination and in their relational use of long take and principle of cutting. Ophuls cuts line by line in a dialogue sequence in his American films, exercising fidelity to script with some variations such as before or after a line is delivered. Mizoguchi cuts at a point when "the relationships at stake in the scene have opened into qualitative change" once or twice in a long sequence (319). Welles on the other hand cuts unpredictably since he uses montage very densely that it becomes difficult to determine the function of editing within his long takes (322).

Why is it important to establish the aesthetic specificities of the long take from one director to another? Nagisa Oshima defines the shot as a unit that contains the filmmaker's method. The temperament of the filmmaker and the way they perceive reality can be derived from the study of their single shot. In a long take, this shot is more lucid and elaborate because the audience sees an uninterrupted consciousness of the filmmaker flowing in real time (11). The filmmaker's and audience's engagement are joined and most sustained in the long take necessary for a dialogic relationship to meaningfully exist.

While the formal exploration of Astruc and Bazin can be used to elucidate the stylistic aspect of the Diaz shot, it does not suffice to articulate its ideology which is germinal in Third Cinema films. Even the social-philosophical turn in the theorization of Gilles Deleuze on European art cinema in which the time-image is a manifestation of the seismic shift of human consciousness to its relationship with reality as a consequence of World War II falls short in capturing the socio-cultural nuance that uniquely identifies the cinema of Lav Diaz. Recent scholarship on the long take and slow cinema in general focus on the function of the long take as style, the necessity of the long take to create in the viewer a wondrous looker, and reconciling the aesthetics of slow cinema with politics.

In their introduction to *The Long Take: Critical Approaches* in 2017, John Gibbs and Douglas Pye outlines briefly the historical usage of the film style and attributes it first to Bazin in the 1940s although Bazin did not use the term "long take" per se (2). Bazin used "plan-séquence" in his study of Welles which was translated into English by Timothy Barnard as "long take." The plan-séquence is characterized by depth of field and

'faith' in reality (3). A couple of scholars in the 1970s engaged with the long take in depth such as Robin Wood, Brian Henderson, and Lutz Bacher. Gibbs and Pye emphasize that their project examines the long take in terms of function and effect, that is, how it operates contextually. Gibbs and Pye refuse to offer a typology as for them it is "generalizing and reductive" (5). Rather, they encouraged their contributors to explore the functionality of the long take in their specific film examples. However, they observe among the most compelling works of scholarship that the strongest defining element of the long take is "sustained looking" which accounts for both the aspect of production in terms of continuity of space, time, as well as action (in cinematography and mise-en-scene) as opposed to continuity editing and reception. The discussion of Gibbs and Pye focuses heavily on style rather than expanding style to reveal its ideological underpinnings. As an exception, they mention the importance of the long take for feminist film criticism for its ability to make space for certain things that are otherwise neglected such as "the daily gestures of a woman" and the artistic exploration that these aesthetic experimentations open as can be seen in the films of Chantal Akerman who avoided "cutting the woman into a hundred pieces, to avoid cutting the action in a hundred places, to look carefully and to be respectful. The framing was meant to respect the space, her, and her gestures within it" (interview in *Camera Obscura*, qtd in Gibbs and Pyle 20). A second introduction in the anthology, Steve Neale's "The Long Take—Concepts, Practices, Technologies, and Histories" offers an outstanding historiography of the long take. His highlight of the scholarly work of Ben Brewster on the tableau aesthetic that was observed in the single-reel French films in late 1900s talks about

precision in the arrangement of objects and bodies in front of the camera (30). This is particularly important to my study as it foregrounds not only space in its tandem with duration but also bodies whose movements co-determine meaning, narrativity, and shot length. However, my study goes further from describing the Diaz shot as an enclosed system of orchestrated bodies and objects and answers the ideological, not the narrative, question of why they are organized as such. This focus on the body or objects is explored in James Rattee's "The Search for Meaning in *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia* (Nuri Bilge Ceylan 2011)." Rattee talks of hapticity, texture, and close up of objects that serve to advance narrative and draw meaning but does not interrogate the relationship of the ideological position of Ceylan and his execution of the long take.

Lutz Koepnick, in his book *The Long Take: Art Cinema and the Wondrous* (2017), argues that the long take functions as a "medium to reconstruct spaces for the possibility of wonder" (1). Koepnick acknowledges how the long take has been widely argued to decelerate fast lives and provide pleasure by giving the viewer enough time to attend to the image (2). However, Koepnick expands the experience and usage of the long take from traditional media to new media, installations, museums and other art spaces and emphasizes how the long take allows for a "radical rupture" in the many fabrics of time that converge in the present: it enables a "newness to enter the present without shock and fear, one suspending any need to encounter the unknown and the nervous activism of contemporary self-maintenance" (4). This newness that Koepnick talks about requires surrendering will, muting expectations, postponing reactions, even interpretations (8). Wonder in this sense is looking without "obstructions" and being aware of the audience's

own seeing (14). Koepnick underlines that wondrous looking is a specific and distinct type of looking—different from contemplative viewing, reverie, absorption, pensive spectatorship, and possessive looking. All these may echo wondrous looking but are not compatible to it. An important question to this differentiation is that can any viewer who may qualify as wondrous maintain this distinction in their experience of the image or is it that they may assume all these modes of looking interchangeably at any given point or moment? Can a combination of these ways of looking yield far richer and textured experience compared to a hypothetically unitary approach to image that is the wondrous? As a position of power, Koepnick maintains, the wondrous spectator does not lose themselves into the image but maintains the positions of "subject and object, perceiver and percept" (23). Though Koepnick speaks of surrender, this emphasis on the spectator as subject makes the wondrous looker superior over the image, a point of contention in my study since in my theorization of the cinematic experience, I do not privilege the spectator over the image but propose a cyclical and non-centric point of reference so that there is visibility of the looker and the looked-at, that is, the looker can also be looked-at by the image, as I will elaborate later. Criticality does not rest solely on the viewer to pass on the text in the same way that textuality does not rest solely on the viewer to construct but all are caught in the web of cinematic experience in which power is democratized and decentralized where the viewer is also criticized and textualized.

Published two years before Gibbs and Pye and Koepnick, *Slow Cinema* (2016) by Tiago de Luca and Nuno Barradas Jorge offers probably the most extensive, theoretically compelling, and diverse anthology not only on the long take but also on its direct relation

to the larger field of slow cinemas of the world. De Luca and Jorge note in their introduction that slow cinema, though conceptually recent, is intertwined with the sociocultural discourse in rescuing "extended temporal structures from the accelerated tempo of late capitalism" (3). Though the slow movement in film is an incoherent body of film and film practices, central to their question is what makes a film slow, considering that slow and the experience of it is subjective (3-4). For example, that cinema in itself as noted by Mary Ann Doane imposes its own duration, placing it in the context of portable and digital media adds to the complexity of how slow is being defined. Slow does not rest on cutting per se, or the quantity of duration, but also in the movement of characters, of empty shots, or the "pillow shots" that Ozu, for example, is known for his films. Other attributes include silence, stillness, content of shot, camera movement, angle and distance, non-professional acting, long shots over close-ups (6). De Luca and Jorge argue, channeling the idea of contributor Lim Song Hwee, that slow cinema expands from the realm of art cinema and establish their economic niche in which there are mechanics, agents, and distribution circuits of these films. In short, slow cinema is not at all alternative but a field in its own right (11). De Luca and Jorge observe that spaces left behind by globalization are where slow films with their distinctive aesthetics emerge. The films are stories of marginalized peoples such as the poor, the laborers, the farmers, and other subalterns. The second and third part of the book particularly offers important theoretical strength of the anthology as it reconciles aesthetics and politics, which, in the insight of philosopher Jacques Rancière, "can be said to operate exactly on the same principle" that "…destabilizes the 'consensual' social order through unexpected

reframings that accordingly reconfigure modes of sensory experience by overturning the idea that only certain subjects, bodies and themes belong to the domain of the aesthetic and the sensible" (13). By making the aesthetics political through cultural specificity and historical contexts and elaborating the many forms of labor involved around slow cinema, de Luca and Jorge's project is an important body of works in which my study of Diaz find its affinity.

A distinct departure from Western filmmakers' methods, the long take of Diaz as a deliberate resistance against the oppression of commercial cinema must be contextualized in relation to his habitus as a filmmaker and subject from the third world. Diaz vocally acknowledges the socio-historical consciousness replete in his films: filmmaking is bound to serve a greater cause of social justice and must be rooted on the basic freedom to create. Diaz falls within the combative phase of third world film culture where film becomes a tool for the filmmaker's ideology (Gabriel "Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films"). Getino and Solanas articulate this ideological position as a revolutionary attitude of filmmakers born out of the long history of struggle against imperialism (109). They place culture and cinema as intertwined concepts in the discourse of the nation and believe that the root cause of all underdevelopment is "nothing but a dependent and underdeveloped cinema" that is at the mercy of Hollywood as a machinery of US imperialism (119). Dominant cinema is responsible for conditioning the audience with standard duration and short-lived meanings that conform to the interest of the market. It "leads to the absorption of forms of the bourgeois worldview" (120). It solidifies a viewing culture which leans heavily on entertainment

incompatible with the avant-garde, the revolutionary, the alternative, the slow. Dominant cinema suppresses narratives from the peripheries and distorts or erases images and identities of the marginalized within cinema as a battlefield of signification and visibility. Worse, it normalizes dominant narratives and keeps the people from seeing themselves as neocolonial subjects and therefore could not start working to change the status quo (117). This resonates with Julio Garcia Espinosa's reflection on *imperfect cinema* which is capable of showing how social problems emerge. As opposed to the bourgeois impulse of contemplating over what is beautiful, imperfect cinema disrupts and disturbs.

While contemplation is certainly possible in Diaz, his long take complicates that contemplation and ruptures it to a confrontation with a people visually emerging in a decimated and deracinated culture. People wander about in a premature democracy where the undeniable destructions of the past, both tangible and intangible, fester and linger. Garcia Espinoza asserts that imperfect cinema must answer a fundamental question: "What are you doing in order to overcome the barrier of the "cultured" elite audience which up to now has conditioned the form of your work?" Overcoming this barrier for Diaz means deliberately veering away from commercially compatible film duration and telling stories that introspect the lives of the marginalized and the disenfranchised and building intensity on their labor to confront the hegemonic powers that subject them to violence. The frames of Diaz capture characters bearing the burden of history—their movement, in need of quiet progression, demands the long take to realize the vision of a people laboring under the weight of time towards individual liberation. To Getino and Solanas, this liberation can be made possible through third cinema which to them is the

cinema that recognizes in the anti-imperialist struggle "the most gigantic cultural, scientific, and artistic manifestation of our time—the decolonization of culture" (116).

An important anthology that came out in 2003, *Rethinking Third Cinema,* edited by Anthony Guneratne and Wimal Dissanayake, proposes that despite Third Cinema being a major branch in film theory, it lost momentum and was neglected in the same way films from "non-industrialized countries" were neglected over time (1). For example, it did not "merit even a dishonorable mention" in the 1996 work by Bordwell and Carroll's *Post-theory* (4). Third Cinema, a theory that emerged from historically specific situations and with a clear ideological orientation, is important precisely because it is not borne out of Euro-American intellectual spaces though it does address the "third world" which is a Western discursive construct popularized in the Bandung Conference in 1955 (7). "Third world" as a semantic crisis was to cause the incoherence and consequent marginalization of Third Cinema as a theory (9). "Third world" does not apply neatly to certain territories such as China, Singapore, and Hong Kong that initially allied themselves as third world nations. The theory had to contend further with this geographical wrangle as more films were being made in the US, Europe, and Japan that had the energy of third cinema but are apparently not emanating from national *thirdness* as an economic category. Constantly, there was a need for a delineation between third cinema and third world cinema (9).

Beyond the semantic crisis, Guneratne and Dissanayake point out that the main cause of neglect were "Eurocentric critical perspectives and philosophical impositions than with the internal disputes within Third Cinema theory" (9). In its inception, early

manifestos of Third Cinema did not create a unified and coherent voice. Tenets of Espinosa's *imperfect cinema* were less restrictive compared to the combative standards set by Solanas and Getino. In addition to problems of definition is the problem of categorization. Citing Michael Chanan, the simplistic description of First Cinema as entertainment, Second Cinema as intellectual, and Third Cinema as politically radical are misinterpretations. Categories such as these are often too clear cut and cause more confusion on what qualifies as cinema of a certain kind (10). For Paul Willemen, Third Cinema must be defined by outlining certain approaches or style (10-11). When Teshome Gabriel's *Third Cinema in the Third World* came out in 1982, he qualified third cinema as polemical: "films with social relevance and innovative style and, above all, with political and ideological overtones" (11). Armes Roy in *Third World Filmmaking and the West* in 1987 brought up the choice and position of the filmmaker and the route a film may go through, steering the conversation towards transnationality (15).

Nicola Marzano re-emphasizes that Third Cinema does not deal so much with country of origin or of the filmmaker's "but the ideology espoused and the consciousness displayed." Marzano sees the need in re-appraising Third Cinema from being a critically viable film theory in the 70s to meet the theoretical demands of socio-political trends in the 80s and 90s that challenged its scope. It must accommodate new questions such as gender and identity politics and must reformulate itself depending on its cultural moment and context, and even in geographies that are outside Latin America, Asia, and Africa ("Third Cinema Today"). Daniel Clarkson writes in 2018 regarding the need for Third Cinema in Trump's America, remembering an important moment in the late 60s to the

80s when an independent and radical movement of Black filmmakers such as Julie Dash and Charles Burnett emerged with their own aesthetics and themes that would be known as the L.A. Rebellion. The movement was influenced by Third Cinema but can also be argued as America's version or corpus of it. Teshome Gabriel saw this a re-defining moment of Third Cinema which must acknowledge its transnational dimension as Third Cinema is really not so much where it is made, or even who makes it, but, rather, the ideology it espouses and the consciousness it displays" (quoted by Clarkson). Clarkson believes that looking back to this body of works, their insights and reception, in the context of Trump's America (and even beyond) will provide "food for thought" to articulate notions of self-determination, oppression, transformation, and empowerment for their Black audience. The resurgence and persistence of film scholars that revive the usefulness of Third Cinema manifests that its oppositional stance remains a potent tool to criticize the oppressive political and cultural systems. The neocolonial and neoliberal situations it criticized back then have not been corrected and have gone worse as the present global political climate shows a pattern of demagoguery, dictatorship, nationalist and fascist policies and rhetorics.

It is within this oppositional framework that I situate Diaz. Considered as an heir to National Artist for Film Lino Brocka, Diaz grew up witnessing war and dictatorship, worked with mainstream film studios, and experienced difficult industrial restrictions and working conditions before he found a sense of liberation through digital technology and severed himself away from the capitalist mode of filmmaking (Baumgärtel 171). For Diaz,

> Digital changes everything. You own the brush now, you own the gun, unlike before, where it was all owned by the studio. Now it is all yours. It is so free now. I can finish one whole film inside this room. We were flooded here four days ago because of the last typhoon and the water went up to our ankles. But we were still able to finish the film. We do not depend on film studios and capitalists anymore. This is liberation cinema now. We can destroy governments now because of digital. 176

Diaz as a renowned filmmaker is often read in the international film circuit in terms of style and the resistant vein that gives his visions their trellis is set aside in recognizing the artistic merit of his films. No scholar to date has placed Diaz and his films under the category of Third Cinema. To read Diaz within the framework of Third Cinema means going beyond the discourse of the long take as a stylistic concern and describe, without having to depart from form, how the long take is an execution of the oppositional and revolutionary ideology that confronts neocolonialism in its myriad overlaps with capitalism and aberrant modernity.

Polytemporality: The Diaz Shot as Resistance to Dominant Cinema

The slowness of Diaz's films challenges the dominant conditions of cinematic experience by putting attention economy into crisis. Slow cinema asserts control over the film theater as the space where a kind of spectatorial contract is ensured (de Luca 23). As new technologies provide new modes of spectatorship, spectatorship has become more individualized; the spectator who is usually removed from traditional viewing sites feels restless in the presence of a slow cinema that activates a heightened awareness of the

experience (25). For Andrew Horton, the modern spectator who is experiencing a fragmentation of time in the digital age has acquired a broken sense of place and space, a kind of displacement that occurs when they are exposed to unfamiliarly prolonged duration (23). Tiago de Luca assumes that the spectator experiences slowness due to "silence, minimalism, stillness, and emphasis on duration" which could easily slip to an impression of temporal indeterminacy where events and their duration exceed what the plot demands, if indeed there is a presence of plot in the first place.[18] When this happens, the viewer becomes self-conscious and directs their attention to the viewing process and the time such process takes up. The restlessness it could cause is symptomatic of the anxieties regarding time in an age of capitalist modernity (29).

Asbjørn Grønstad writes that "slow cinema…spatializes duration and thus it makes something invisible visible. By evacuating all but the infinitesimal action from the frame, by bracketing inaction, what the extreme long take visualizes is the passing of time itself" (275). This visualization of the passing of time sustains a crucial moment of inabsorption—a rupture in the cinematic experience—that makes slow cinema reflexive. The spectator enters the sphere of a polytemporal cinematic experience as opposed to a unitary linear temporality caused by mainstream conditioning with homogenous time. This time matrix which I call *polytemporality* creates a textured experience of time on the body—basically subsumed by capital as a unit of labor—by not allowing it to drift; rather, polytemporality marks the spectator's body, making it visible to itself. Thus, slow cinema, by visualizing time, visualizes the spectator's body and maps that body within a

[18] de Luca is analyzing the use of long take in Taiwanese filmmaker Tsai's *Goodbye Dragon Inn* (2003).

network of *times*. "The more slowly and carefully we look at something, the more puzzlingly it looks back at us, it seems" (Abbas 34).[19] The network of times is translatably the network of looking, which is also a network of power relations. Trin T. Minh-ha analyzes this act of looking too long as a surrender of power:

> to pause and look more closely than is required, to look at what one is not supposed to look at in the context of cinema action, cinema affection, cinema superproduction, upsets the established order in all its forms, to the degree that the very duration or intensity of the gaze is controlled by society….The image is subversive, not through violence and aggression, but through duration and intensity. The eye that gazes with passion and acuteness is one that induces us vaguely to think—as the object it sees is an object that speaks. The image that speaks and speaks volumes for what it is not supposed to say—the pensive image—is one that does not facilitate consumption and challenges the mainstream film in its most basic assumptions. 114-115

This network of *looking* bodies—bodies on screen, spectators' bodies, the film as a body —is a *difference* mainstream cinema effaces wherein the spectator gets caught in verisimilitude, immerses in entertainment, and suspends the act of questioning. For good films, in popular notion, are supposed to make the body forget about the passing of time, not become conscious of it, by recording only a significant happening and reducing or excising dead time or else the spectator thinks watching is a waste of time or money since

[19] Abbas examines Wong Kar-wai's films to point out the confusion of the neocolonial subject regarding Hong Kong as a colonial space, under the rubrics of what he calls the "politics of disappearance."

homogenous time is measured against productive human labor (Schoonover 65, 74). This theory on the form of mainstream cinema, as Jonathan Beller argues, is one developed by capital:

> though the meanings of cinema are found in language, its significance is not language; its significance is in the symbolic known as capital. In principle, all of the possibilities, affects, and experience available in the cinema are capable of being symbolized as capital—in other words, converted to exchange-value at some earlier or later stage of social production. (188)

As media function as "belts" that create organizing connections within the post-industrial society, the consciousness is also coextensively structured with this organization by "… introjecting industrial process directly into the mindscape" and thus is born the "cinematic mode of production" (190). Movie making, moviegoing, the movie house, the modes of viewing, the capture of audience, everything under the regime of visuality are organized via the logic of capitalism (198). Beller refines this theorization in *The Cinematic Mode of Production* which argues that

> cinema and its succeeding (if still simultaneous) formations, particularly television, video, computers, and the internet, are deterritorialize factories in which spectators work, that is, in which we perform value-productive labor. It is in and through the cinematic image and its legacy, the gossamer imaginary arising out of a matrix of socio-psycho-material relations, that we make our lives. This claim suggests that not only do we confront the

> image at the scene of the screen, but we confront the logistics of the image wherever we turn—imaginal functions are today imbricated in perception itself. Not only do the denizens of capital labor maintain ourselves as image, we labor in the image. The image, which pervades all appearing, is the mise-en-scene of the new work. 2

What the visualization of time reveals is the hidden labor of spectators, of bodies both as capital and units of labor pre- and post-figured in the image-making in mainstream cinema. But because Diaz's cinema provides no entertainment, the spectator's body is marked and made naked, forming the network of laboring bodies and making the cinematic experience an experience of total conscious labor. With the commodification of time, the working clock does not stop ticking even when spectators think they are spending their free time watching—the time *spent* is in fact an extension of work, is work, and looking means perfecting the industry of visuality, a web from which there is little escape, if any (Appadurai 80). For to forget time is to forget labor, to visualize time is to visualize labor—labor that is not only projected on screen but also enacted by and thus projected on the spectator's body. This is how the body becomes the ultimate new screen in the era of visuality: the body is a crux of time, the basic unit of labor and consumption, one which renders our lives in a perpetual parallax, captured in a dizzying installation of gossamers. Multiple times find axis in the body, because the body, though matter, can live in different temporalities; the body is a site of constant difference where multiple temporalities flow and live.

On the contrary, slow films carry with them this dead time and reverse the conventional production of meaning that is grounded on the principle of calculating the film's temporal properties in relation to the dominant viewing culture of the spectator (30). Films such as that of Diaz find exhibition only in film festivals and recently in online film databases and rarely in commercial cinema houses since their duration does not conform to the logic of distribution and the normative standards of popular spectatorship. Diaz's long take, an organization based on a resistant "other" logic, powerfully re-organizes a capitalist world and reverses capital's shock in the audience's mindscape through an alternative worlding and experience of time. It places the attention economy into crisis.

Diaz is aware how length complicates the consumption of his films. But he does not care about commerce and market. For people who stay and sit for say eleven hours, they understand the struggle of spectatorship which requires an endurance, an entry to a "total cinema experience" ("Lav Diaz in Conversation" 4). The cinema of Diaz requires an engagement rather than mere spectatorship. The audience does not simply watch or contemplate unintruded in their privacy but the positions of the viewer and the performer "are interchangeable without notice" (Gabriel "Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films"). The film as intentionally powered by criticality, in turn looks to its audience as objects of criticism, allowing them to realize their complicity in the bare life experienced by the characters in the narrative: a kind of cyclical visibility where the line between the looker and the looked at is erased. So it is not without fault that third world cinema has to be serious: "the Third World…is still engaged in a desperate struggle for socio-political

and economic independence and development and cannot afford to dissipate its meager resources and/or laugh at its present political and historical situation" (Gabriel). It still cannot laugh at itself.

In the presence of a Diaz film, the spectator has to endure dead time—the impression that nothing productive is happening in relation to narrative development. In her investigation of how time is represented in the actualities of early cinema in *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, Mary Ann Doane assigns "time that is excluded or elided is constituted as "dead time"—time which, by definition, is outside of the event, "uneventful" (159). An event is a moment in which time is marked (141), that is, it is a unit of meaning that is legible and readable while dead time is empty of meaning, thus its elision. Cinema has a predilection for the contingent as evidenced by how the actualities were received in the early years of cinema but when its novelty waned and narrative cinema came about, a new structure of time was established so that each event must form a meaningful relationship to the narrative, or rather, each unit (either shot or scene or action) must be an event in the sense that it should mean something. "The embarrassment of contingency is that it is everywhere and that it everywhere poses the threat of an evacuation of meaning. The concept of the event provides a limit—and reinvests the contingent with significance. The contingent is, in effect, harnessed" (144). Narrative condenses time in events as units of meaning (161) which focuses the viewer to a production of its narrative structure and thus positions them in the center of spectatorship, in a place of stability. Narrative corresponds to the economic logic which is to operate with linearity and efficiency, "crucial goals of scientific management in its attempt to

deploy the human body in labor with a maximum reduction of wasted time." Modernity therefore is obsessed in producing events even as it thrills itself with contingencies and emergencies. Because modernity fears and is anxious of what it does not understand, it will annihilate—if it could not assimilate—anything that does not produce its coherence. Dead time, being meaningless, paradoxically semantically disrupts the linear production of meaning through the event and becomes its own site of semantic richness—no longer a singular temporality of the present but a temporality that clashes with and destroys the modern sensibility. Doane thus suggests to rework dead time as "the condition of the conceptualization of the "event" (159). In Doane's reading of *Execution of Czolgosz, with Panorama of Auburn Prison*, she observes shots of empty spaces, that is, spaces where nothing is happening "but which has at least a metonymic link to the site in question. It is almost as though the filmmakers hoped that the panoramas' temporal coincidence with the event would somehow bleed over into the restaged scenes and contaminate them with their veracity or authenticity" (154).

Dead time, which effects boredom, has a cultural dimension for spectatorship. Richard Misek suggests that the fear of dominant cinema to be qualified as 'boring' is built on a culture that refuses to deal with the passing of time. Boredom in this sense promises an "important cultural role of encouraging us to reflect on the limited time-span of our lives" (777). Anchored on the philosophy laid out by Heidegger in looking into what causes boredom, Misek asks if boredom is caused by the thing that is boring, by boredom itself, or in by being bored by a boring thing. In short, is it us or is it the film? (778). But boredom does not rest on this simple polarity. In between subject and object,

audience and film, is relation, the experience, the act, the encounter, the staying, or waiting. Boredom is thus part subjective and part objective. That we seek to escape boredom manifests our choice which time and object are significant or insignificant, wherein significance is not an issue of profoundness but legibility or optics conditioned by capital. Misek writes that "boredom can bring us face to face with ourselves" (781), makes us aware of our own presence, the capture of our bodies. For to endure cinema is to endure our bodies in this moment of capture. In Misek's reading of Kiarostami's *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999), he observes how dead time functions as the structuring principle. Kiarostami uses techniques for time passing such as repetition or lack of progress, silence or no use of music, long duration, and focus on the routine and quotidian life (783). Misek writes that boredom may lead to an ethical position with the self as one embraces their emptiness of existence and the temporal limitation of their lives and perhaps "appreciate various temporalities that exist beyond our own" (783-784). Doane saw a necessity of dead time by reframing how contingency is an organizing principle of meaning-making while Misek contemplates on the profound effect of enduration to reconstitute the self and make room for the Other as an effect. In reading Diaz, dead time allows the viewer to focus on the contingencies of the laboring human body and spot how the violence of modernity is sustained in the performance and thus invites a deeper ethical understanding of the social ills and inequalities that pester in postcolonial nation-states.

As observed in slow films that use the long take further than style or form, dead time yields opportunity for thought and simulation of feelings that make the narrative

even more profuse with complexities of meanings. For example, Andrew Horton, in his examination of the works by Theo Angelopoulos, writes that Angelopoulos strives to maintain the pleasures one gets from slow cinema because it has the power to make the audience inhabit a unique place and space where three time layers are embedded: the historical, the actual, and the mythical—all woven together in a long take. In *Eternity and a Day* (1998), a long take covers the scene of a boy and an old poet walking beside a river at the *present* time and, in an uninterrupted shot, a poet from a previous era arrives and stands few meters away in the same physical space as the river side thus putting together in a Bergsonian duration the present time with the past. This poetic energy that fuels the narrative's philosophical vision is aptly embedded in the metaphor of the river that is continuously flowing to bind together three generations. The characters of Angelopoulos pass geographical and temporal borders within a long take he describes as "a living cell which inhales" (23). For him, the long take is not a mere decision. It feels natural. The dead time which editors typically splice is in fact necessary because it serves as a moment for the spectator to contemplate and think and feel, to inhale in between an action and the anticipation for it to happen. Dead time contains the complex temporalities that are bound within a single take taking the audience to navigate different time spaces and experience connections of and within the time matrix.

In the films of Tsai Ming-liang, the spectator feels the weight of the inner lives of the main characters as they traverse aimlessly and trivially, like ghosts, in his oftentimes claustrophobic universe or as they search desperately for human connection, deal with loss, and float in moments between the time of the living and the dead (Lim Song Hwee

93) such as what can be observed in *Goodbye, Dragon Inn* (2003) and *What Time Is It There?* (2001). Grønstad observes in *Stray Dogs* (2013) that slow cinema as form has the potential to become an ethical stance as Tsai Ming-liang asserts how we need time to see through the confusion of modern life, of time that is "a condition of possibility for intrinsically ethical acts, such as recognition, reflection, imagination and empathy" (273-274).

In the cinema of Apichatpong Weerasethakul, dead time is a percolation of the spiritual, political and historical lives—imagined and remembered—to the present life of the character in *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (2010) (Bergstrom 2). The languor caused by duration has a trance-like effect and effectively evokes the fleeting. The out-of-joint time alludes to the political history of Northeast Thailand as a site of trauma (Boehler 63-64, Kim 48). For Apichatpong, the film is an invitation for the spectator to develop a relationship with cinematic time regardless whether one understands reincarnation in relation to Buddhism or not (Boehler 51). The long take melds mythical and political time over a single space in *Cemetery of Splendour* (2015) and suggests the cyclicality of life and death (Marshall 237) and the blurring of boundaries between the real and the surreal (231). The anxiety within a cartography of time that is the postmodern condition of cinematic experience is a welcome thing in slow cinema. It is a necessary stage for a fruition of deeper thought which otherwise may not always happen in the presence of commercial films. The long take retrains the spectator's perception and reorganizes their experience of time.

The Diaz Shot as a Triadic Structure

The cinema of Diaz exhibits a *space-time-body* integrity achieved most profoundly in his archetypal shot. The Diaz shot is an extreme wide angle long shot sustained in a long take in which the physical environment is a hostile space where human bodies arduously move. In this film world, the forces of nature are engulfing and are images of historic destruction (Ingawanij 106). A scene usually begins empty and the spectator has to wait for a figure moving into it, tiny and approaching from a far distance, until the figure goes out of the frame. The time the figure takes to walk in and out of the frame is the actual duration of the shot. The scenes and sequences of Diaz operate on a tempo based on the biomechanics of his laboring characters. These bodies in motion are recorded in actual duration until they arrive at a moment of gestural intensity which reveals their motivations, idiosyncrasies, and modes of survival. This physical realism shows people in a process of being in the making, of subjects emerging from struggle that is the national-popular spirit (106). The audience does not simply witness the suffering of a people or engage only in contemplation but also "gift(s) the time of viewing… moved by the intensity of the melodrama played out over such durational extrem(iti)es [sic]" (109). This creates a sharp but ambivalent relation with the spectator's body that is safely outside the screen and yet experiences the discomfort of extreme duration coevally in the presence of exhausted bodies. Diaz, while giving his audience time to think, uses dead time to build up patterns of movements of characters to establish the rhythm of life of the *other*, and in Philippine context, the culture and bare life of the Filipino subaltern as postcolonial subjects. The space-time-body integrity is a manifestation of what

Teshome Gabriel calls an "*endless* world of the large Third World mass" ("Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films").

Space has more primacy than time in the third world since films, as Gabriel observes, carry the germ of folk tradition "where communication is a slow-paced phenomenon and time is not rushed but has its own pace": the pace of the body over the space that it spans. Wide angles function not to put characters in isolation from their environment as is common in Western cinema but to emphasize the interrelationship of character and environment. In the cinema of Diaz, landscape and environment do not function as mere literal spaces. Diaz treats space as the milieu of characters before he looks for a pre-filmic geographic template. In his frames, the *empty* landscape is filled with a *presence* of a vision of a universe which the characters later inhabit. With the extremely difficult one frame method and the long take, the audience notices the idiosyncrasy of that universe, its character. Once the human characters emerge or enter the frame, the established universe forms a relationship with the characters. The environment is not subordinate to characters but plays as an actor in a Diaz film. This way, Diaz cultivates perceptibility on the audience to pay attention to the universe before them, to probe beyond plastic beauty, see beyond image, hear beyond words (Diaz "Emancipated Cinema").

As space performs as character, it expands to the allegorical nation when in tandem with time since the long take in Diaz's films is historically and culturally informed. The long take executes the specificity of experience under a broad historical trauma and the nostalgia for Malay biorhythm (Mai "Slow Burn"). By unravelling the

present in continuum with the past and treating narratives as microcosms of the grand narrative of Philippine history, Diaz's films, though ironically theoretically rooted on a pre-colonial temporality of the Malay, acquire an allegorical national dimension. Ismail Xavier observes that encoding the destiny of the nation in a narrative is recurrent among filmmakers in the third world (333-334). The Diaz shot is a basic unit of this code where historical forces are manifested in the actual duration of the drama, and time, in its integrity with space in the wide angle long shot, is an important dimension of human experience (341). To interpret the narrative of Diaz is to read the present as a consequence of the past, a reading that can be done through "a removal of the layers added by time, providing the conditions for the revelation of naked truth" (342). In Diaz's narratives, "time [is] a force of destruction and corrosion…a directionless piling up of violence" (345). Suturing with space and time, the body completes the formulation of the nation-form.

The body, broken by laboring in time and spanning wide spaces, functions in the Diaz shot as the ultimate bearer of duration. Schoonover explains that in slow cinema, there are at least two bodies of slowness: the body in the screen and the body of the spectator (68). The body in the screen in the tradition of art cinema, Steve Neale asserts, "has always been concerned with the inscription of representations of the body from those predominating in Hollywood" (in Schoonover 68). Schoonover expands this idea and calls these bodies as *wastrels*: bodies who are seers rather than actors, a new aesthetic that emerged as an aftermath of the war where cinema did not only visualize action but also visualize time (Deleuze, *Time-Image* xi). Wastrel "designates both people who waste

too easily and those vagabonds who society treats as waste and who, like refuse, are thrown to the side of road" (Schoonover 68). The presence of these wastrels makes visible nonproductive time which critiques the quantification of human labor and human life. Though Diaz does not extremely portray wastrels, his characters exude the same tone of suffering by performing unproductive labor that directly distorts or deforms the human body. The characters are not wastrels because they are capable of sustaining the struggle to live but wastrels for wasting physical exertion that promises no (re)solution and in turn, *waste* the audience's time by performing extreme durations with their bodies. However, confining the reading of the characters' physical movements as *unproductive* is failing to recognize what Marx calls as *real* labor—in the interpretation of Chakrabarty—to include difference of temporalities in the sense that what is *real* includes humans and non-humans, which are the raw materials that are made *abstract,* that is, abstracted from their source and transformed to become universally legible through its consumable form which is the commodity:

> The transition from *real* to *abstract* is thus also a question of transition/ translation from many and possibly incommensurable temporalities to the homogenous time of abstract labor, the transition from *nonhistory* to *history.* Real labor, the category, itself is universal, must nevertheless have the capacity to refer to that which cannot be enclosed by the sign *commodity*, even though what remains unenclosed constantly inheres in the sign itself. In other words, by thinking of the commodity itself as constituted by a permanent tension between real and abstract labor, Marx

> builds, as it were, a memory into this analytical category on what lies on its outside, something that it can never completely capture. The "outside" is constitutive of the category. The gap between real and abstract labor and the force ("factory discipline," in Marx's description) constantly needed to close it is what then introduces the movement of "difference" into the very constitution of the commodity, and thereby eternally defers its achievement of its true/ideal character. Chakrabarty 54

Following this logic of unenclosable gap between real and abstract labor and applying it to both labors of characters and audience, the experience in Diaz cinema plays out the juxtaposition and therefore translation of the temporalities of the subaltern vis-a-vis the hegemonic audience. Thus what is visualized—time that unmasks labor, the *erasure* between capital and commodity—and experienced, is perpetual difference. This I propose is the core energy of how the cinema of Diaz is a critique to the nation-form: it dismantles the interworking of capital by revealing the temporalities that are otherwise erased and muted and reinscribes it in the viewing process. Capitalism, in its erasure of time and form between capital and commodity, is isomorphic to the exclusion and exploitation of the subaltern from the neocolonial nation-state, the petri dish in which we examine the cell that is the Diaz shot.

Labor in *Mula* is only unproductive because whatever labor they do, it always amounts to nothing because the systemic structure does not allow life in this universe to flourish. The failure of the people is not autochthonous in their bodies but is a result of the violence of the neocolonial structure that must first dehumanize the subaltern prior to

their ingestion. Neferti Tadiar, writing about dominant forms of humanization that instigate violence on everyday life of postcolonial subjects, forms which has become the basis of global political economy of life, highlights their consequent "distinction that is crucial to the operation of new processes of value-production, characteristic of the global financial economy, that is, a distinction between *life worth living*, that is, life with the capacity to yield value as living labor, and *life worth expending*, that is, life with the capacity to yield value as disposable existence" (140). The nation-state, in its capitalist tempo that plugs it into the world-system, is the sovereign that decides who must be killed. The subaltern body must first enter the state of bare life, a stage when human lives are transformed into expendables so they can expire along with the natural resources and ecosystems that are made to conform in the accelerated and unsustainable pace of capitalist consumption.

Unlike the postwar neorealist characters that Deleuze, Schoonover, and Neale analyse for their wasting bodies, the characters of Diaz are not individuated in Lukacsian sense to be said as thrown-into-being in modernity. It is the incompleteness—not the full arrival—of modernity that has rendered the barrio stale as a traditional space of cyclical time. Like Ackbar Abbas who is arguing about new cultural strategies to think about the unique postcolonial condition of Hong Kong and making a counterclaim that "the wiping out of identity may not be an entirely negative thing, *if it can be taken far enough*" (14), I emphasize that the position of my critique is not anti-modernity but clarify that it is the lack and failure of it that must be interrogated to expose the workings of capitalism that prevent modernity's positive arrival for the subaltern. Within the violent gyration of the

incompatible times of tradition—and its consequent social formations—with modernity are subaltern lives reduced to bare lives and, finally, to exhaustion.

In *Mula Sa Kung Ano ang Noon*, Diaz formulates the nation-form by mapping a small barrio that is geopolitically isolated by forests, seas, underdevelopment. The rain, treated by the people as an evil omen, is persistent in the narrative and present in almost all frames in the film, the large ocean waves that hit the dark and rugged rocks are relentlessly violent, the ground is always muddy, the forest is enchanted where the cattle die when they enter, the mountains are not mists or mere outlines but always distinct and brooding even when they are far. In a span of three hundred thirty-eight minutes, the spectator witnesses how this barrio decays for being cut off from the government's promise of progress: the elementary school lacks classrooms which students do not often attend; there is no high school, no hospital, no concrete roads, and the main bridge unfinished. Established as a periphery, the government decides to send the military forces to camp in the barrio due to a suspicion that the insurgents have taken refuge in its mountains. This leads to the people abandoning the once quiet and peaceful place, receiving the state's iron hand instead of benevolence to improve their quality of life. The barrio is a microcosm of many peripheral spaces in the archipelago that failed to modernize during the Marcos regime while Manila, as a monument of the regime's ambition to flaunt a hollow symbol of the nation's modernity, was being concretized as a metropolis out of excessive loans from World Bank and the IMF, the majority of funds siphoned by the Marcoses's coffers in offshore banks.

The barrio as a space where negative modernity is experienced is exemplified in a scene where Heding, the military who spied the village for two years, reports to her superior, and they both listen to Marcos's declaration of Martial Law. Offscreen is either the television or radio where the voice of Marcos, interrupted by occasional noise of interference, is heard. The invisibility and uncertainty of technology that represents modernity evokes a negative absence which suggests that the barrio is an out-of-bounds site for progress whose transmission is heightened by the lack of clarity in the form of signal interference. Diaz shots this barrio always in extreme long shot and uses depth instead of editing, composing with strong awareness of foreground, middleground and background through orchestrating characters to move across three planes. Despite the action taking place within, the Diaz shot forces the viewer to deal with the large negative spaces around characters and objects, prompting a *horror vacui*—the fear for empty spaces that explains the exuberant tendency of Philippine visual and spatial culture, in its celebration of festivities, and use of architectural spaces (Lorenzo 546-547)—that rather comments on the degeneration of a society being emptied of life force, a universe that Nadin Mai describes as concentrationary ("The Concentrationary Universe").[20] When the characters exhibit pain or anger or despair, Diaz does not zero in on their faces but maintains the physiognomy of the landscape, the spectator sees the characters from afar and feels the intensity of their emotion through the dark sky, the rain, the storm, the crashing waves, the howling wind, the swaying trees, the fluttering leaves, the silence. Instead of a human face for a closeup—the face of space, the face of the universe. Diaz

[20] Mai describes the worlding of Lav Diaz that is built on creating "conditions of fear, angst, torment and paranoia for the character as well as for the viewer" (1), parallel elements found in concentration camps.

never removes the people from context; the landscape dwarfs them without pity. The barrio as a close system is shot progressively as a summation of the spaces travailed by its people.

Subordinate to space, time plays out in *Mula* as the story starts in medias res and the performance of the present is an uncoiling of what has taken place in the past—isomorphic to the postcolonial nation-state that succeeds the colonial experience. Itang, the older sister of mentally challenged Joselina, is already downtrodden by years of taking care of her younger sister who could not walk, talk, and take care of herself. Their neighbor and father figure Sito has grown old in his inner loneliness. His adopted boy, Hakob, has been consumed by a strong sense of longing for parents he never saw. The barrio where they live and where their lives are contained is now in the state of exhaustion from years of government neglect and these are visible in the way duration enables the spectator to witness the minutiae of their lives. Time is what it takes for old Sito to plant or harvest rice in the field or wait for a wild dove that wouldn't show when he hunts in the forest, for Itang to start and finish her Ave Maria or scrub the floor or clean Joselina's excrement all over her body or move through a long distance carrying Joselina on her shoulder to the sacred rock by the shore where they hope for a miracle, for the silences in between their conversations, for Hakob who acts as an errand boy to neighbors in the barrio crossing one house to the next, walking long distances, barefoot and shivering under the rain.

The seemingly unproductiveness in the way time is expended by these characters transforms into a rhythmic pattern of life as a ritual of poverty, illness, and death the

longer the spectator immerses in the world of this barrio: the social consequence of a major historical trauma that is the Marcos regime, preconditioned by the long uninterrupted succession of colonialism by the Spaniards, Americans, and Japanese. Culturally speaking, Diaz employs the long take as a rehearsal of how time was experienced by Malays whom he believes to have had no concept of time but only a concept of space. The pre-Hispanic Malay world, configured in the chronological historization of Teodoro Agoncillo, was a place where the natives had a sense of belonging, prosperity, literacy, and established form of government (Ileto 100). Diaz explains that the way Filipinos conceive time in the present is non-existent before they were colonized. Since the Philippines is archipelagic and the waters surround the people, nature governed them more than time ("Lav Diaz in Conversation" 3-4). Diaz theorizes that this unique conception of time is a Malay character responsible for an attribute of slowness. He asserts that the precolonial Malay had so much abundance and hospitality, and they took their time indeed before they finally raised arms and fought the colonizers. The Filipinos waited for more than three centuries of oppression by the Spaniards to finally revolt for independence, twenty-one years of Martial Law under Marcos before the collective demonstration in 1986 that restored democracy.

Diaz's claim to Malay persistence of physical rhythm, as embodied by the subaltern characters of *Mula*, resonates with what Dipesh Chakrabarty calls heterotemporality which critiques the temporal exclusions of homogenous time that aligns with the developmental time of modernity and progress (Lim, Bliss 12). Lim points out that since historical time is homogenous, it "served as a justification for

imperialist expansion…imperialist discourse depended on a temporal strategy in which radical cultural differences brought to light by colonial contact were framed as primitive or anachronistic. Imperialist discourse—whose "discovery" of new worlds was "never in fact inaugural or originary"—framed territories as empty and discoverable by denying their inhabitants were there" (12-13). Therefore, the persistence of the past in the present finds conflict in the outmoding teleology of homogenous time which marks the past as already over. This past, perpetually gnawing at the ambitious presentism of the nation-state, contains lifestyles, practices, worlds and worldviews, which continue to exist in spite of the flattening project of modernity. These other and "older modes of being…[are] never entirely surmounted" (15).

Prasenjit Duara explains that "the last two centuries have established History as we know it—a linear, progressive history—not only as the dominant mode of experiencing time, but as the dominant mode of being….time overcomes space—a condition in which the Other in geographical space will, *in time*, come to look like earlier versions of us" (*Rescuing History* 17). For newly-independent nations, modernity's grand material dimension that is the nation-state aims to establish coherence against many *anachronistic* and subaltern communities that permeate the ins and outs of the national imaginary and remain in the true duration of their culture. For Chakrabarty, "the fiction of a single present is a containment of heterotemporalities" (Lim, Bliss 14). However, time as construct *and* as language fails to translate other modes of being: "the time of history is one in which heterogeneity is translated into homogeneity in order to govern unsettling, radical difference. Such temporal translations are naturalized—so that we forget that we

are even translating very different temporalities into the modern one—yet they belie a "radical untranslatability" (18). While the end of colonialism is a bookending in history, the postcolonial subjects do not always emerge anew: postcoloniality is a mere relationship to time in the same way that pre-coloniality is a mere relationship to time only that the latter does not rest well with teleology for what is pre-colonial technically resists History; it is outside of it.

The narrative from the dismantling of colonial power over colonized subjects does not break but rather continues within which subaltern subjectivities exist, survive, and flow in the same way that when the colonial powers arrived and stayed, they never completely deracinated the precolonial cultures of people. Lowe and Lloyd suggest that this continuity of culture acquires a political force especially when it emerges as a cultural formation that resists "economic or political logics that try to refunction it for exploitation or domination" (1). They acknowledge that colonialist and neocolonialist capitalism produce sites of contradiction that are effects of its always uneven expansion but that cannot be subsumed by the logic of commodification itself (ibid) and emphasize the dynamism of culture—veering away from the binary of tradition and modernity for their anteriority and posteriority, respectively—to account for the cultural formations that are in direct and indirect relations with capitalism's exploitative modes and highlight how the contradicting power of these formations are "rooted in the longer histories of antagonism and adaptation," not only seeing them as alternatives of "the "other" outside, but "what-has-been-formed" in its engagement and encounter with modernity (15-16). Bliss Lim emphasizes the need to find ways to recognize and translate these plural

formations (21) which is what Diaz accomplishes in the long take as the basic unit of an uninterrupted duration, the past and the present in a unified whole: the subaltern persisting and demanding coeval labor with their audience, both becoming contemporaneous—the act of spectatorship acquires a space-time dimension of pluralities.

The characters in *Mula* insist their temporality by almost always doing labor. They tend to move slow in the laboring act and when they are not moving, they are usually slouching, talking slowly or not at all. Itang had to wait for time before she decides to stage a silent confrontation with the wine-maker who repeatedly rapes Joselina when Itang leaves the house. Or wait for more time before Itang decides to liberate herself and Joselina from suffering by jumping off a cliff in the shore. Hakob sculpts his dream of seeing his parents in time by accumulating earning from a boy who steals money to buy Hakob's slingshots, or lags in silence before giving an answer to a question, or lives his childhood as an ennui over a long incoherent chapter that never seems to end. Whatever they do, they have no sense of urgency. Diaz subtly builds rhythm out of the piling of all non-urgent moments, contingencies in the language of Mary Ann Doane, with an ever-clearer tempo, in non-manipulative cuts, until the film closes with its final shot. Diaz presents *Mula* in black and white photography which gives the film a feel of a life's distant afternoons from long ago, the space that is the homogenous reduction to a colorless world (Arnheim 15):[21] the singularity of the grand

[21] Arnheim discusses how "a multicolored world [has] been transmuted into a black-and-white world" and explains that this reduction is not merely an issue of color but also of the relations of colors that consequently change with the reduction. The audience accepts the reduction nevertheless because of the phenomenon that he calls "partial illusion."

narrative of the subaltern who were left out during the Philippines' massive modernization in the Marcos years, of a memory told by a disembodied male narrator whose voice we hear only in the beginning and the end of the story. Is he the voice of the grown-up Hakob? Is he the voice of Diaz who based *Mula* on his personal experience as young boy in Southern Philippines? Is he the voice of every Filipino who looks back to the Marcos years as one of the darkest moments in Philippine history? *Mula* as a memory is an enclosed universe not only of space but also of time, an imagination of what was, an apprehension of oneself as a subject and an expression of one's drive for, if not renunciation of, the suffocating nation, both as loss and lack.

In *Mula*, the bodies of characters are deformed by illness and unproductive constant labor. Joselina as a village healer is herself mentally and physically challenged; Itang while strong and able-bodied has sloped and rounded shoulders, Sito stoops with old age and limps when he walks, Hakob, while young, looks frail and small. Diaz emphasizes how these bodies perform under each burden in many moments: Hakob tiny in the frame carries a large bunch of bananas on his back, Itang hangs the heavy Joselina on her shoulder, Old Babu and military-spy Heding balance merchandise on their head, the wine-maker carries large jars of wine on his back while moving to and fro, Sito performs all sorts of backbreaking work despite his aching body. The audience witnesses how the characters strive to sustain the weight in long periods of time, starting out like dots in the horizon moving to the foreground in the frame, until they need to rest so they may be able to continue the labor. The labor is cyclical, a kind which offers no progress —a wait out, a mere passing of time, or of lives that are past desiring.

Figure 4. Itang, after poisoning Joselina, carries her to a cliff and jumps; *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon* (2014) by Lav Diaz

To say that the subaltern bodies moving in the space-time of the Diaz shot are exhausted simply because of labor is an optics that misses their agency. Labor is not the means to their destruction but the end result of their will to persist within an oppressive system. All characters, except Hakob, live in the state of melancholia, in a strong sense of loss and trauma where desire is silenced if not lost altogether, to many years of abjection. Hakob on the other hand steals a map from the elementary school and traces the far away island and the sea he is determined to cross to see his parents—a desire founded on a kinder truth told by Sito. Because when Hakob was just a baby, Sito found him bathed by his mother's blood in the forest; the mother has just been killed by the father and the father is about to kill the baby Hakob. Sito kills the father, saves Hakob, and makes Hakob believe his parents had to leave because as lepers they had to be isolated in an

island leprosarium. Hakob poring and sleeping over the map invokes an imagination of a nation, an obvious nod to Anderson, that is more desirable than his claustrophobic barrio: Diaz inscribes in the child the possibility or a futurity where one can find a way out of the system, towards a temporality and spatiality—the completion of his family—that does not exist. At the end of the film, the subaltern bodies disperse by physically leaving the unlivable barrio in search for peace (Javadi "Vicariously Violent: The Case of Lav Diaz's From What Is Before"). Or in Itang's case, by ending her life in search for liberation, her final act of resisting the nation-state's liquidation of her and her sister's body and thus reclaiming her agency as a sovereign subject.

Conclusion: The Diaz Shot as the Nation-Form

In the absence of the long take, the fate and life of Itang, Joselina, Sito, and Hakob moving in spiraling degeneration will not fully crystallize. The subaltern characters in the cinema of Diaz share a common destiny in which the national body realizes itself through the surplus of expendable bodies of the subaltern. The fate of characters is the oeuvre of Diaz encoded in the tripartite long take that contains the national popular Filipino experience. Often socially marginalized and oppressed, their destinies are destinies of the greater public suggesting that the suffering is collective. For Diaz, Philippine society and culture are cursed. It is a corrupt(ed) society with a bloody history ("Lav Diaz in Conversation" 4). Diaz, however carefully composed his pictures may appear, presents characters that navigate a problematic universe, experiencing the violence in a field of trauma shaped by centuries of colonial—and later neocolonial—subjection (Mai *The Aesthetics of Absence* 5). The films narrate the betrayal of the nation

state to the Filipino: "…quiet tales of the sorrow and resilience of a people…the Philippine state as a force of death" (Ingawanij 105). The integrity of the nation is made possible through the ingestion of the subaltern, the dried-up fodder that late capitalism preys as its raw material.

While film is acknowledged as a potent media in "producing nations and shaping national imaginaries" (Ginsburg et al, 11), this reading is not without dangers. Like Frederic Jameson in 1986 who proposed an essentialist theoretical model of reading third world novels (68-69), reading the cinema of Diaz as a national allegory denies the specificity of individual experience and totalizes all others to a single experience possible in the third world. Diaz as a well-recognized filmmaker in prestigious film festival circuits peddles a vision of a national society because of the internationalizing context of exhibition—the narratives become nationalized precisely because they are first internationalized. This flattens a rather textured contemporary experience in Philippine society which resists any typification: it is multilingual, multiethnic, archipelagic, and economically stratified.

Like the inadequate artifacts that Anderson has examined such as the newspaper, the novel, the map, the museum, and the census in *Imagined Communities* (1983, 2006), film poses its own limits as a troubled site when looking for authenticity and accuracy. Another danger is exoticism. To quote Glauber Rocha in "Aesthetics of Hunger," this allegorical narrative might only align with "the European [or Western] observer… interested in artistic creation from the underdeveloped world to the extent that it satisfies his nostalgia for primitivism; and this primitivism is hybrid, dressed up as late legacies

from the civilized world, misunderstood because imposed by colonialist conditioning" (13). This self-orientalism positions the filmic world and its subjects to perform fantasies under the Western gaze that expects and demands an essentially *orientalist* narrative.

However, the filmic construction of Diaz does not simply stop at Orientalizing but provides a systemic vision and deep context of the third world situation. The Diaz shot critiques the rigidity of a postcolonial society that aggressively homogenizes peoples and cultures and liquidates further the disenfranchised—whether it is the subaltern or their ecosystem—to build the nation-state premised on the alibis of developmentalism and anti-imperial nationalism combined with state nationalism. It provides an analysis of the stereotype by showing how bare life is not an ontological essence in the character nor a statement of Diaz's denial of their agency but a result of that agency within systemic failure. The subaltern body seeks to persist in an enclosed system that suffocates. Representation is performative and requires that the characters be read in what they do rather than who they are: how suffering is performed by the body, why the body has come to a point when it has to perform that suffering—in consideration of the textual, contextual, and historical dimensions. This way, identity is a construct, slowly and simultaneously crystallizing through bodily movements, mondialized by the barrio as its cinematic universe. As a result, we see a different imagining of the nation: Diaz constructing it from below and worlding a space-time that annihilates its filmic subjects so that its out of screen subjects may begin annihilating that world.

Through a sustained performance of characters moving and wandering about, their movement becomes a mapping of the archipelago thus opening or redeeming the possibility of the nation-form, a renewal of the nation-state as a failed and incomplete project of modernity, and a process towards establishing self-identity (Ingawanij 109). Though Diaz's teleological conception of time is recognizable, it is misleading. His films show history's vicious cyclicality from which there is no beginning or end, where there is no escape, where traumas, by fission and fusion, give birth to new traumas—as his shot is not only a cell which originates life but also a prison that engulfs that life and assures its destruction.

CHAPTER III

BLACK BODIES, WHITE EARTH: RE-MAPPING A POST-ERUPTION LANDSCAPE TOWARD AN ECOCINEMA OF THE PHILIPPINES

When *Manoro* (an Aeta word for teacher) came out in 2006, the independent film saw empty seats in the few cinema houses where it was shown and was unheard of by mainstream moviegoers despite its important social and cultural analyses of the plight of the Aetas, an indigenous community in the Philippines struggling with discrimination, displacement, poverty, and illiteracy. A narrative film shot like a documentary, *Manoro* opens conversations on aesthetic sensibilities in Philippine cinema especially in relation to the habits and modes of spectatorship of mainstream audience; as a work of fiction, it dramatizes an indigenous situation but films in vérité style the struggles of the Aetas years after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in 1991. In a country where environmental and indigenous problems are intertwined, *Manoro* as an environmental justice film can potentially blaze trail in establishing ecocinema, a genre that is yet to achieve critical circulation in the Philippines.

Manoro is a fictional story of a thirteen year-old Aeta named Jonalyn Ablong and her village. Produced in partnership with the Center for Kapampangan Studies of Holy Angel University in Pampanga, *Manoro* showcases a non-formal community-based education where a young Aeta combats illiteracy, one of the most pressing social issues faced by the cultural minority.[22] Jonalyn Ablong who has just graduated from elementary school teaches the elders in her community to read and write so they can cast their vote at

[22] A deeper investigation on the degree of collaboration among Mendoza and the Aetas during the production of this film may yield more insights on the determination of aesthetics, performance, and the politics of control of indigenous representation in films made about them.

the 2004 Philippine National Election for the first time. However, on the day before the election, her family discovers that her grandfather has not yet come home from hunting in the mountains. Jonalyn and her father embark on a search for Jonalyn's grandfather so he can cast his vote, going through a journey of considerable distance and difficulty, only to fail in their search. *Manoro* captures in documentary style the complex psychological, socio-cultural, economic, agrarian and political tensions faced by the Aetas as a result of the eruption that opened their civilization to the outside world. Known as the ultra-neorealist director from the Philippines, non-Aeta filmmaker Brillante Mendoza shot *Manoro* with minimal directions for acting and dialogue, maximum use of outdoor location, natural light, and employment of real non-actor Aetas, similar in narrative style with his other film *Foster Child* (2007) and in filming method with *Tirador* (2007). When Mendoza won Best Director at the 2009 Cannes, critics dubbed his work *Execution of P/ Kinatay* (2009) as ultra neorealist, a style that does not only capture life as it is but also renders its ugliness and horror with an unflinching treatment ("Brillante Mendoza's life and art at The Met"). Compared to Mendoza's other works that gained stronger international recognition such as *Masahista* that won the Golden Leopard at the Locarno in 2005, *Lola* that received the Grand Jury Prize in Miami International Film Festival in 2010, *Ma' Rosa* which bagged the Cannes Best Actress for Jaclyn Jose in 2016, *Manoro* is less known and circulated in the Philippines and abroad.

This chapter acknowledges that the body of ecocinema in the Philippines is fast expanding but is currently unmatched in terms of categorization or recognition *as* ecocinema in scholarship. To label them as ecocinema establishes a stronger discourse in

Philippine environmental humanities, amplifies the influence of the films to educate their viewers, and examines their strategies in laying out the activist agenda to demand for accountability regarding the pressing environmental issues in the country. Though this chapter takes *Manoro* as a case study, it does not claim that *Manoro* is an ecocinema of first instance or a set-apart text. Part of the vision and intervention of this chapter is to provide support to educators who are currently using *Manoro* as an instructional material. The most notable works of ecocinema in recent years are independent films that tackle indigeneity and conflicts in ancestral domains, the climate catastrophe, mining, and deforestation.

Collaborative filmmaking with indigenous communities in Mindanao by Mindanaoan filmmakers make up an important body of environmental justice films. Sherad Sanchez's *Huling Balyan ng Buhi* (2006), infused with indigenous Matigsalog folksong, Matigsalog actors, and set in the forests and hills of North Cotabato, presents a war-torn space contested by communist rebels and soldiers. The theme of a war-torn ancestral domain reverberates in the films of Arnel Mardoqiuo and Arbi Barbarona. Mardoquio's *Crossfire* (2011) tells the story of a displaced Higaonon Bae Magdas and her daughter Bitoon who are taken in by the oppressive Datu Mantukaw who has compromised his responsibility as a tribal leader by doing shady business and shifting loyalties with whoever has money he could extort. Based on a true story regarding a Matigsalog family whose ancestral domains have been destroyed by deforestation and made a battleground by rebels and the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Barbarona's *Tu Pug Imatuy* (2017) casts Matigsalog performers and uses Matigsalog chants to follow an

indigenous family's struggle to survive the atrocious violence of soldiers. Also working with Matigsalogs is Bagane Fiola who casts Matigsalog performers in *Wailings in the Forest* (2016) in which he presents a lush and tranquil world of the Matigsalog hunter-gatherers on the brink of displacement and imminent hunger as the other tribe's agricultural practices are changing and lowlanders are encroaching their ancestral domains.

When super typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines in 2013, a number of ecofilms came out in the following years to capture the trauma and rippling effects of the catastrophe and imagine a future darkened by climate crisis. Mendoza's later work *Taklub* (2015) probes into the lives of the people of Tacloban in the aftermath of the record-breaking Haiyan. The film was made in cooperation with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and was commended by the Ecumenical Jury at the Cannes Film Festival. Another independent Filipino filmmaker, Lav Diaz, released his observational eco-documentary *Mga Anak ng Unos* (2014) which follows the lives of children survivors of typhoon Haiyan and his short narrative ecofilm *Ang Araw Bago ang Wakas* (2016) that renders an apocalyptic vision of the greatest storm that inundates the Philippines in the year 2050. This apocalyptic vision is further carried out in *Ang Hupa* (2019), a sci-fi film which is set in 2034, three years after a volcanic eruption that placed Southeast Asia in darkness and Manila ruled by madmen. These films by Diaz use the long take and static single camera technique in evoking the horrors of the Anthropocene. Adding to the post-Haiyan body of films is Allan Balberona's *Invisible Town* (2019). In the aftermath of the super typhoon, the survivors were led to the mountain by a false advisory that a tsunami

is coming only to realize, after evacuation, that there was no tsunami and discover upon their return that their hometowns have been looted.

In 2016, an ecofilm titled *Oro* directed by Alvin Yapan, attracted public attention especially among animal rights advocates. While the film tackles environmental racism by telling the murder of poor miners by a paramilitary group, it also depicted the actual beating and slaughter of a dog on-screen. The film was pulled out of the 2016 Metro Manila Film Festival and movie theaters. Yapan and his producers were banned from joining the MMFF for one year (*ABS-CBS News*). Other notable mining films include *Siyudad sa Bulawan/City of Gold* (2018) by Jarell Serencio which portrays three siblings working in a gold mine in Mt. Diwalwal, Compostela Valley. The children work under extremely dangerous conditions in order to support themselves to school. Kanakan Balintagos' beautifully photographed slow-paced film set in Palawan, *Busong* (2011), tells the story of an indigenous woman who is covered with unhealable wounds to confront issues of illegal logging and copper mining that destroy communities and ecosystems in the islands. Along with these films are an increasing number of works produced outside Manila and compete in regional film festivals such as the Cinemalaya Film Festival, Sinelamdag Film Festival, Salamindanaw Asian Film Festival,[23] Binisaya Film Festival, and Cinema Rehiyon, where vibrant conversations not only on filmmaking but also on the politics of the process of filming and representation take place. Many of

[23] Salamindanaw Asian Film Festival is directed by Gutierrez Mangansakan II, an important film scholar and multi-awarded filmmaker from Mindanao who provides optics and style of filmmaking that is distinctly Moro. Mangansakan also edits and publishes the online film journal *New Durian Cinema,* a significant venue for scholarship on Philippine independent and regional cinemas. His film corpus deserves a comprehensive critical study because of his subject-position as a Moro filmmaker and the distinct representation of Moro subaltern subjects and sociopolitical issues in his films.

these works come as short films made by emerging filmmakers in the regions which evidence the high engagement of young filmmakers with the craft and the social issues that they advance. For example, *Sakmit* by Seph Tan, shown at the Sinelamdag Film Festival in Koronadal City in 2019, presents the lonesome struggle of Ben, an old forest defender armed only by his bolo to fight an armed illegal logger. He requests a gun from the mayor but the mayor, himself involved in the illegal logging business, advises the logger to burn Ben's house so that Ben may decide to leave the forest. Subtle and beautifully shot, the film is framed within a film which the viewer only realizes at the last part, a strategy that effectively elevates the film to the plane of pedagogy and advocacy. Though this chapter does not provide a comprehensive mapping of the entire corpus of Philippine ecocinema, a massive work that needs extensive research and venue, it invites a more sustained commitment from scholars working on the intersections of cinema studies, indigenous studies, and the environment to come together and cultivate the field.

As an important note, this chapter focuses on a specific type of ecocinema with alternative aesthetics that consciously dis-identify from the mainstream in terms of techniques and cinematic experience. Emphasizing *environment* as a more expansive concept, Stephen Rust and Salma Monani in the introduction to *Ecocinema Theory and Practice* (2012) write that environment is "the whole habitat which encircles us, the physical world entangled with the cultural. It is an ecology of connections that we negotiate to make our meanings and our livings" (1). So is the role of cinema that negotiates, consumes, and is being consumed within the scope of this *environment*. What counts therefore as films that inspire audience to take action is not limited to mainstream

films that easily evoke to the audience an awareness of environmental problems and the urgency to act. I seek to problematize the possibility and failure of radical aesthetics of an ecofilm like *Manoro* in critically engaging the spectator with the issues it presents. Core to this paper's argument is how *Manoro* as an environmental justice film weaves race and ethnicity with environmental issues by foregrounding and giving depth and nuance to the often stereotyped character of the Ecological Indian. While *Manoro* characterizes Jonalyn with strong ecological sensibilities, it also undermines this essentialism by evoking the inner tensions and contradictions she experiences in her act of upholding the survivance of her community. Mendoza visualizes her interiority in the post-eruption landscape of Mount Pinatubo through the structure of her journey—read in this chapter as an act of remapping the site of trauma where the black bodies of the Aetas contrast with the earth made white by volcanic ash from Pinatubo. Black bodies against white earth is a visual metaphor of the ethnic hierarchy between the Aetas who are highly conscious of their dark complexion, kinky hair, and short stature and the lowlanders that they call "white people," their loss of sovereignty over their ancestral domain, and their mode of survivance amid a rapidly changing Philippine society. This chapter acknowledges that while *mapping* carries with it a colonial implication, *re-mapping* interrogates the coloniality of the term and highlights the agency of Jonalyn in empowering the Aeta community in their quest for survivance. Likewise, citations of anthropological sources while inherently colonial in gaze and precarious toward exoticizing the Aeta situation are used to elucidate the analysis and attend to *Manoro's* aesthetics as an ecocinema with a strong ethnographic tradition. As *Manoro* presents a microcosm of the larger

environmental and cultural struggles faced by Philippine indigenous communities in the twenty-first century, it grapples with the challenges that an independent ecocinema faces in terms of distribution, accessibility, and audience appreciation due to the unpopular aesthetics that Mendoza chose in his filming and the generally marginalized state of independent films in the Philippines.[24]

Manoro as a work of ecocinema offers visibility and introspection of a marginalized group in relation to land loss, poverty, and illiteracy, and calls for critical attention as an important genre in Philippine cinema. Paula Willoquet-Maricondi defines ecocinema distinctly from the usual environmental film: ecocinema are "films whose overt intent is to educate and provoke personal and political action in response to environmental challenges" (44). *Manoro* as an educational tool tackles race and ethnicity by foregrounding as filmic character the Ecological Indian, a controversial image stereotyping (American) natives as "ecologists and conservationists," depictions challenged by Shephard Krech and pointed out by Corinn Columpar as politically expedient since the stereotype can function as a strategic essentialism that eventually leads to anti-essentialist ends (Monani 230). *Manoro* educates and engages its audience to activism by using the aesthetics of the documentary and boredom to achieve what Scott MacDonald calls a "retraining of perception" (109). In "The Ecocinema Experience," MacDonald writes that certain films that have instances of ecocinema "offer[s] audiences a depiction of the natural world within a cinematic experience that models patience and

[24] By marginalized, I am in consonance with Patrick Campos to mean the lack of distribution and exhibition of independent films in commercial spaces. Please see "The Intersections of Philippine and Global Film Cultures in the New Urban Realist Film," page 3.

mindfulness—qualities of consciousness crucial for a deep appreciation of and an ongoing commitment to the natural environment…inverse of hysterical approach of commercial media…" (19). It is important for MacDonald that ecocinema is not shot like Hollywood films but instead finds an alternative that counters mainstream modes of spectatorship thereby providing the audience "new kinds of film experience" and advance "a more environmentally progressive mindset" (20).

Manoro's attention to race and ethnicity, specifically of Jonalyn as an Ecological Indian, enables the audience to imagine and visualize the lives of their cultural Other, a move that is necessary to address racism and reveal the lack of responsibility by the majority culture in addressing the Aeta struggle almost three decades after the eruption. Dan Flory in "Race and Imaginative Resistance in James Cameron's *Avatar*" explains that some "viewers are cognitively impoverished with regard to imagining race in general: they will likely have extreme difficulty in centrally imagining racially "other" characters, which also bodes ill for their real-world prospects for moral engagements concerning race" (41). The Aetas are discriminated by many Filipinos for their physical, intellectual, and material stature.[25] Without sufficient and responsible representation in

[25] To read an in-depth historical and anthropological study of discrimination and exclusion of the Aetas and indigenous peoples in the Philippines, see *Exclusion of and Discrimination against the Indigenous Communities: Case Study of the Philippines* by Erlinda Burton and Chona Echavez (2011) and "The Philippine Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Land and Life: Challenging Legal Texts" by Jose Mencio Molintas; for a first-hand account of the dismal situation of the community, see Fernando Briosos, founder of Aeta Tribe Foundation in "February 2015 — Formation of Aeta Tribe Foundation"; for case of capitalist encroachment to ancestral land, see Guillaume Lavallee's "Philippines' Aeta people 'beggars' in their own land"; for discrimination in voter's registration, see "Aetas cry discrimination" by Tonette Orejas, Anselmo Roque and Armand Galang. For militarization and shutting down of Lumad schools, see "Driven from home, Philippine indigenous people long for their land" by Rina Chandran and "Philippines: Militarization and Lumad cultural rights" by Hanna Hindstrom; for assault on Lumad people and activists, see "Stop the Lumad Killings" by Pam Tau Lee, "Lumad people claim their language and identity despite extreme violence" by Elena Tkacheva, "I tended to the bodies: attacked by the Philippine army" by Jonathan Watts; for Lumad people's struggle for education, see "Mindanao Lumad struggle for empowerment through education" by Lucelle Bonzo.

media and popular culture, the Aeta situation is easily dwarfed by issues of *national* concern. By framing real-life Aetas, *Manoro* grants them a chance to represent themselves, to signify rather than be signified.[26]

The representation of Jonalyn as an Ecological Indian coming from an imperiled and deterritorialized indigenous group is vital in engaging an audience for activist possibilities. Salma Monani in "Evoking Sympathy and Empathy: The Ecological Indian and Indigenous Activism" foregrounds the filmic character of the Ecological Indian as a powerful element that can generate sympathy and empathy, two concepts Monani contrasts as *feelings for* and *feelings with*, from the audience: "…sympathy, as primarily a concern *for*, is motivated not necessarily by as sense of sharing but instead by a sense of charity. While altruistic, charity signals a sense of concern that is hierarchical in nature, and inherently patronizing. In contrast, empathy, which is tied to sharing of feelings, hints at an altruism that is more grounded in a sense of equality" (227). Monani cautiously

---

[26] Previous narrative films and television features depicted the Aetas by employing non-Aeta professional actors who colored their face and skin with make-up to achieve the Aeta's dark complexion, wore wig to have kinky hair, and spoke in Tagalog for dialogue. In certain cases, mixed-race Filipino comediennes such as Whitney Tyson and Elizabeth Ramsey occasionally play as Aetas for their dark skin, evoking laughter built on racial discrimination. In as early as 1960, Ramsey starred in *Princess Naranja,* a fantasy movie based on a series in a weekly magazine *Liwayway,* in tandem with the "King of Philippine Movies" Fernando Poe Jr. Ramsey is alternate to a beautiful fair-skinned princess played by Lani Oteyza who was enchanted and thus has turned dark and comic. Though the film does not explicitly define Ramsey's character as Aeta, the racist overtone is obvious. In big production features such as Eddie Romero's *Aguila* (1980) and Celso Ad Castillo's *Pedro Tunasan* (1983), the Aetas are represented as rather peripheral in the narrative, comprising only a few sequence, with less dialogue, without names, individuation, and character development—mere backdrops to huge stars such as Fernando Poe Jr. and Lito Lapid, respectively. The longest drama anthology in Philippine television continuously featured heart-rending stories of Aetas directed by non-Aeta filmmakers. Based on real-life stories, the episodes are high in affect and strong in truth claims. For example, see *Maalaala Mo Kaya: Abo* (1995) played by non-Aeta actors Roderick Paulate and Caridad Sanchez; *Maalaala Mo Kaya: Basket* (2001) with young superstar Judy Ann Santos; *Maalaala Mo Kaya: Ilaw* (2018) with Jhong Hilario and Zaijan Jaranilla playing Roman and Norman King, the first Aeta to graduate at the University of the Philippines; *Maalaala Mo Kaya: 600 Pesos* (2019) with Maymay Entrata, Nyoy Volante, and Mercedes Cabral.

distinguishes the difference between the two affective concepts especially when talking about race. She quotes Dan Flory who asserts that "racial assumptions often impinge on how viewers feel concern for or with characters" (227). Monani explains that race can get in the way for white audience to empathize with indigenous characters. Thus the level of emotional engagement that the Ecological Indian evokes as film character can be foundational for activist possibilities, for the audience "to think philosophically about the racialized dimensions of film perception, the human condition, and the current circumstances of human equality" (Flory, qtd. in Monani 227). Monani uses the theory of audience engagement by Murray Smith which follows the triad of *recognition*, the "mimetic referencing" of the real world by the filmic world, *alignment*, a process which involves "spatio-temporal attachment" and "subjective access" (228), and *allegiance*, the process in which the audience "go beyond understanding, by evaluating and responding emotionally to the traits and emotions of the character, in the context of the narrative situation" (Murray, qtd. in Monani 228). These three layers of engagement create a deeper connection between the filmic character and the audience, enabling the majority culture to cognitively and affectively identify with the marginalized.

Mendoza strategically makes the audience not only feel *for* the indigenous but also feel *with* the indigenous by employing non-professional Aeta actors as main filmic characters. Through using a documentary approach, employing the Aeta language, and shooting at the actual site of eruption, mimetic referencing is achieved as the filmic world is constructed within the Aetas' real world. The audience also identifies with the Aeta as main filmic character through the alignment process achieved by framing Jonalyn in

almost all scenes in the film. The camera-as-narrator operates in close connection to Jonalyn's consciousness allowing the audience to see the filmic world *over-her-shoulder*. This artistic choice enables the audience to journey with her and see how she moves within the post-eruption landscape during her search. Once the audience align with Jonalyn's consciousness, they are able to weigh the gravity of her tensions and feel her emotions in relation to her effort in maintaining the survivance of the Aetas.

Manoro portrays Jonalyn as an Ecological Indian with depth and nuance by tightly establishing the relationship between her interiority and the post-eruption landscape of Pinatubo, suggesting both terrains to be interconnected. Jonalyn's movement in the landscape is an act of re-mapping a now colonized space while simultaneously enabling the audience to learn of the psychological, intellectual, and spiritual tensions and contradictions she experiences in the act of attaining a sense of survivance for herself and her people. The post-eruption landscape has become a contested ground where a "sorting of space [is] based on ideological premises of hierarchies and binaries" (Goeman 2-3). Appending "re" to *mapping* acknowledges the hybrid strategies of native women, borrowing the concept from Mishuana Goeman's *Mark My Words,* in weaving traditional and new stories that tell of their tribe's survivance. In *Manoro,* re-mapping means a sense of reconciling the binary between the old and the new, the traditional and the modern Aeta, and pushing for continuity and adaptation embodied by Jonalyn as an Ecological Indian.

Reading Jonalyn's act of re-mapping a post-eruption landscape emphasizes the Aetas' need to return to Pinatubo as not only propelled by practical reasons such as failed

attempts of the government to integrate them in the lowland society, their incompatibility with livelihood programs, the cultural difference and mistrust that the Aetas have toward lowlanders, nor the Aetas' active claim for ancestral rights over their land as an indigenous community who has "uninterrupted occupancy…across time"[27] (Malayang 666) but also to reconnect themselves to Pinatubo as their spiritual center (Seitz 78). Contrary to most outsiders' view of environment, Pinatubo for the Aetas is not merely a possession or resource. The Aetas do not consider that Pinatubo belongs to them. Instead, it is they who belong to Pinatubo. How the Aetas see themselves in the light of material poverty is different from Western point of view. Material wealth is not an indicator of prosperity or development but access and absolute right over their land or ancestral domains (Austria 69). For the Aetas, poverty means being severed from the land from which they owe their life. It is because land is integral in the determination of the Aeta identity. "To the Aetas, home is not a house; it is a place. It is a geographical area where, somehow, they feel they belong, where their children don't get sick often and where they feel at ease. Even if they transferred their house to another portion of this general area, it is as though they have only moved from one room to another room of the same house" (Tima 45). Severance from land creates complex tensions in the Aeta consciousness. The physical trauma of the landscape is a visualization of the complex psyche of Jonalyn as a representative of a post-eruption generation of Aetas asserting to continue the Aeta traditions while adapting with the changes of the times. Jonalyn's

[27] Malayang outlines three alternative approaches to understand the legitimacy of ancestral domains. One is historical: claims can be based on "uninterrupted occupancy…across time." Many indigenous communities in the Philippines hold on to this approach since the political and legal approaches favor the State as sovereign over all Philippine soil.

interior tensions in her act of upholding the Aeta survivance is externalized in her journeys through ravines, slopes, and rough roads.

Manoro visualizes Jonalyn's psyche as a site of tension through the lahar-covered landscape. The triple displacement experienced by the Aetas caused by the eruption, incompatibility with government interventions and lifeways in the lowland, and eventual contestation over Pinatubo has created a complex psychical tension in Jonalyn. Donelle Dreese in "Psychic Reconfigurations of Culture and Place: Sites of Confrontation and Refuge" writes that remapping the landscape of home is always psychological. The psyche is a site where home is constructed, it is more than a place or a sense of it but "an environment in which people feel accepted and loved for who they are and where they are free from oppressive forces" (47). Dreese challenges the physicality or materiality of home and environment, a strategically decolonial move in a sense that home is ascribed beyond literal space and a metaphysical sense of place can exist. Both redefinitions interrogate the idea that nature can be colonized or possessed, a redeeming insight in countering how nature, having been objectified for so long, have been reduced to a mere site of contestations. However, the materiality of Pinatubo for the Aetas is vital not so much for its wealth of resources but for its locative significance to their spirituality, identity, and freedom. In *Manoro*, the landscape is not only literal but also metaphorical as it functions to externalize Jonalyn's consciousness. Jonalyn in her act of remapping experiences psychological tensions marked with entrapment due to the loss of indigenous space among the lowlanders and the herculean struggle of educating her community that is yet to acquire mainstream literacy, othering for being an individual who possesses

"superior" knowledge over the Aetas and inferiority when in contact with lowlanders. Jonalyn reconciles this double othering when she enacts her integration to the basic cultural life of the Aeta by participating in a communal dance ritual. Jonalyn's intellectual consciousness is troubled by her awareness of the *now* dysfunctional literacy of the Aetas and her need to meld her progressive knowledge and the traditional knowledge of her grandfather. Lastly, Jonalyn's spirituality rooted on the Aeta tradition is affirmed through the invocation of Apo Namalyari in their journey through the canyon and in their kneeling before the deity after which Jonalyn's father goes deeper into the mountain in his search.

Mendoza captures Jonalyn's sense of entrapment in an extreme closeup while she sings an Aeta folksong on their way up the mountain:

> I bid my father permission to hunt deer,
> I was the one entrapped by the people instead.
> I bid my mother permission to catch birds,
> I was the one entrapped by the Aetas instead.

By employing the folksong to echo in the lahar-covered mountains, Mendoza interfaces an Aeta oral tradition with a space recently altered by a natural disaster. Jonalyn being a bearer of tradition but an Aeta born after the eruption provides a context that inflects a new meaning to the folksong. The folksong now alludes to their displacement and Jonalyn's task of educating her community. The word hunt in the first line speaks of the natural surviving mechanism of the Aeta as hunter and gatherer provided they can roam freely in Mount Pinatubo. In the second line, the Aeta persona is entrapped by the *people*, the hunter becoming the hunted. These two lines describe how their freedom to hunt

eventually changed as a result of the volcanic eruption. When they migrated to the lowland, the resettlement proved incompatible to their psycho-social and cultural outlook. When they returned to Pinatubo, their ancestral land had been encroached by the lowlanders. The Aetas are trapped by the lowland people. The third line continues the narrative of hunting but in a playful tone suggested by the word *birds*. This playfulness hints at how young is the persona. Indicated by the words father and mother, the stanza depicts a nuclear Aeta family and the young speaker asks for permission to embark on a hunt which can be read as a rite of passage to a wider world where the speaker discovers or meets challenges along the way. As a thirteen year old, Jonalyn is at the threshold between childhood and adulthood, at the stage of flowering into maturity and waking up to the harsh realities experienced by her people. Instead of a chance for freedom, the departure from home to the outside world—parallel to the displacement of the Aetas from Pinatubo—becomes an entrapment as Jonalyn realizes the massive work that is needed to improve the lives in her community. In the fourth line, the Aeta is entrapped by fellow Aetas. Jonalyn's individual effort to eradicate illiteracy among her people seems an entrapment since mainstream education for the Aetas is a difficult task.

Jonalyn's descent and contact with the lowland make her doubly othered. By ascending to the role of teacher, Jonalyn stands alone as someone who is considered *other* by the Aetas because of her capacity to read and write. By descending to study in the lowland, Jonalyn has suffered being seen and seeing herself as *other* creating in her a feeling of inferiority. The lowlanders generally stereotyped the Aetas as uneducated and uncivilized leading some young Aetas to deny their heritage. At school, they do not want

to raise hands to admit they are Aetas when asked by teachers. Younger Aetas in the lowlands try to blend with non-Aetas by using cosmetic products and going through skin treatments (Santos). Trapped in this double-edged otherness among the lowlanders and among Aetas, Jonalyn does not only carry what WEB DuBois calls a double consciousness, defined in the *Souls of Black Folks* as the "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (3) but also a sense of isolation, an emotional ambivalence arising from her difference and sameness with her own people. *Manoro* hints at this sense of inferiority in Jonalyn when up in the mountain she plays with a much younger Aeta girl whom she combs to straighten her kinky hair. The girl wants Jonalyn to stop because the combing is beginning to hurt her. Jonalyn tells the girl to stay still if she wants to be queen because "queens have straight hair." But the girl says "I don't want to be queen anymore." The hair of a racialized body such that of the Aetas is inherently paradoxical in terms of its semiological power: the hair is the only part of the body which can be cut, manipulated, removed, or added without much biological consequence to the body and yet bears much influence on looks, identity, and personhood. By way of synecdoche, hair can be a signifier of an entire person making the hair an autonomous locus of identity discourse. Kobena Mercer feels that there is a need to look at activities happening on and around the hair as "cultural activity and practice." As a marker of identity, strands of history can be organized around the hair not only in terms of self-expression but also how the hair embodies the "norms, conventions, and expectations" of the society (34). Mendoza emphasizes Jonalyn's isolation in a sequence

where she sits outside one of the classrooms and tears election pamphlets into pieces while she waits for her grandfather. The visual enunciation progresses from long shot, medium shot, and extreme close-up allowing for an intimate view of frustration in Jonalyn's eyes (Figure 5).

Figure 5. A close-up of Jonalyn waiting for her grandfather; *Manoro* (2006) by Brillante Mendoza

Jonalyn's integration to the basic cultural life of the Aetas happens through the communal act of dancing, a reconciliation of her psychical tensions when she dances with her grandfather back to the foot of Pinatubo. Jonalyn's grandfather leads the entire community to dance and in a short while, Jonalyn joins him and moves with sheer delight. The camera does not stand as an outsider from the dance by otherwise capturing it in a long shot, instead the camera becoming more haptic—emphasizing embodiment—is in the dance through close-ups and medium shots of the Aetas: both are in motion within a space of ecstatic celebration (Figure 6). Jonalyn's grandfather, having caught a

wild boar in the mountain, throws a party for the entire neighborhood that night where young and old Aetas dance, a revitalization of a fading tradition among the new generation. The dancing of Jonalyn signifies an act of embracing her identity as an Aeta and a partaking in a communal ritual that is slowly vanishing among the Aetas of her age.

Figure 6. Blurred by motion, the camera is caught in the dance; *Manoro* (2006) by Brillante Mendoza

Jonalyn's journey in the Pinatubo landscape is a mapping of her intellectual consciousness, a symbolic act of carrying over her grandfather's knowledge in the mountain to her education in the lowland. In mainstream perspective, Jonalyn's position as a teacher in her village places her on a higher intellectual authority over the Aetas. As Jonalyn searches for her grandfather, she admonishes every elder she meets on her way to work on their writing and cast their vote on the next day. The village children call her

"teacher." Jonalyn's parents learn to write because of their daughter. However, as the Aetas participate in the national election for the first time, they are confronted with the challenge to face their lack of education. Previous attempts to reach out to the Aetas prior to the eruption proved difficult in terms of securing learning materials, facilities, and funding. Coming to school in itself was in conflict with the natural Aeta niche which was gathering food. Putting them inside school meant taking food away from them. And because the Aetas lived on a daily basis, perceived by mainstream society as without regard for long-term security in the future, students were often absent in school. When their teachers went downtown to request for books and facilities, they were told to use the old ones because anyway, "they are just Aetas" (Westfall). After the eruption, some non-Aeta teachers found it difficult to sustain working with the Aetas in the resettlement due to factors such as long distances that they had to travel everyday and the uncomfortable living situation in the resettlement; some teachers were irregularly paid (Seitz 82).

Resulting from contact with majority culture, Jonalyn's growing awareness of the intellectual challenge that her community faces puts her in a frustrating position. Her father is not serious about casting his vote and sees his capacity to write his name more useful in filling in an application form for a Pinatubo resort owned by Koreans. On the day of the election, some Aetas do not find their names in the voters' list, some complain that the letters in the computerized list are undecipherable and look different from what Jonalyn had taught them. Even though the Aetas may be able to cast their votes, it is not the kind of choice that is informed but one dictated by dirty politics. The election, a mainstream mechanism of the State, becomes a way for corruption to creep into the Aeta

culture as evidenced by a scene on vote buying. The irrelevance of such democratic mechanism, the long-standing neglect of the government to the plight of the Aetas, and the lure of money make the Aetas an easy prey to the dirty politics of the country. What the Aetas apparently need is far more than simply being able to write a name.

Mendoza visualizes his expression of Jonalyn's negotiation between her mainstream education with old Aeta knowledge in two scenes: one, by showing her grandfather fetching her after the election closes and two, her grandfather remarking about not casting his vote during the night of communal dancing. In the first scene, the frustrated Jonalyn slowly walks behind her grandfather on their way home from the polling precinct. The camera emphasizes her interiority through a close up for twelve seconds. Then for six seconds, a ninety-degree high angle shot shows the grandfather walking. From the same angle, what follows next is a frame empty for eight seconds, understandably the space between Jonalyn and her grandfather, and slowly, Jonalyn's shadow enters the frame. She trails behind her grandfather, her grandfather stops, waits for her, takes her hand, and they walk alongside each other. The act of waiting, the empty space, trailing behind and walking together show the continuity of knowledge between the two, between the old and the new generations, and the subtle suggestion of a reconciliation between two knowledges as Jonalyn finally meets her grandfather after both characters have spanned cultural and physical geographies in the narrative. Jonalyn understands that the knowledge and identity of her grandfather are not inferior to those of the new generation of Aetas. In the second scene, during the communal dancing, when asked about not being able to cast his vote, Jonalyn's grandfather says "it does not make

me a lesser person." Her grandfather's remark is a confident expression of wholeness and a subtle resistance to participate in an immature democracy that operates only for the benefit of mainstream society. Here, Mendoza enforces the need not only for Jonalyn but also for the audience to recognize the intellectual sovereignty of indigenous knowledge as embodied by Jonalyn's grandfather passing on to Jonalyn, even as Jonalyn adds to that knowledge by equipping herself and her elders with mainstream literacy, a dynamic structure of an Aeta knowledge system crucial to their adaptation.

Jonalyn's journey in the landscape reconnects her to the spiritual relationship of the Aetas with Pinatubo. As an indigenous community with a unique cosmovision, the Aetas possess their own mythology and practice an animistic belief system. "Aetas believe in spirits living in springs, rivers, rocks, trees, fields, mountains, and almost anywhere else…the existence of these spirits is as real as the wind which, though invisible to the human eye, can cause the branches and leaves of trees to sway in the breeze" (Tima 47). The Aetas believe in the interrelationship of things and the spiritual immanence in things that make the environment sacred. Jennifer Machiorlatti in "Ecocinema, Ecojustice and Indigenous Worldviews: Native and First Nations Media as Cultural Recovery" highlights the role that native media plays in recovering culture, tracing ancestral lineage, and reconnecting people together into a single whole. The worldview of natives expresses "an ecology of wholeness where separation and disconnection cause disease, and where integration and connection foster vibrant health and abundance" (63). She maintains that the ecology for the natives is the "cosmology of interrelatedness" where all things in the earth and those outside of it depend on each

other. Indigenous peoples position themselves in an interrelationship with their environment and look at environment beyond a material aspect of their existence. Their environment is central to their spirituality and identity which complicates the moment they are separated from it. In *Manoro*, the Aetas choose to go back and stay in the lahar-covered village because it is home to their Supreme Being, Apo Namalyari, the source of sustenance and life.[28] When angered, Apo Namalyari can cause a catastrophe such as the eruption of the volcano.[29]

Jonalyn exercises her spirituality as an Aeta when they journey through the canyon and when they pray to Apo Namalyari in the mountain. First, Jonalyn and her father go through a passage in a canyon where they walk against the current of a river. Echoing within the walls of the canyon is a disembodied chanting of an old Aeta woman: "Apo Namalyari, Almighty One/ We are gathered here in our plantation/ You're the only One who can help us." Jonalyn looks up and searches for the voice. In this scene, the visual-aural elements capture the desperation of the search on the literal and figurative

---

[28] One major reason why the interventions of the government and NGOs in resettlement areas failed is their lack of consideration to the worldview and spirituality of the Aetas. Using the concept of Aeta resilience, Gaillard and Le Masson argue that the Philippine government implemented centralized policies that are not compatible with the coping strategies of the Aetas. The Aetas had very little involvement in the different stages of rehabilitation which translated to having little control over their resettlement, recovery, and livelihood. Instead of facilitating fast recovery, the government's failure to integrate cultural knowledge of the Aetas on how they can better return to normalcy delayed the resilience process (317).

[29] Rufino Tima records that an elder Aeta named Pan Key-ang warned the men of Philippine National Oil Corporation in 1988 who were drilling to tap the geothermal energy of the place. "They bought heavy drilling equipment and bored three holes deep into the mountain" (63-64). The company abandoned the project few years later when they discovered problems in rock formation underneath and acidity of underground water. "The wells were capped and sealed. But the power deep beneath the mountain would not remain sealed. Before long, it awakened and unleashed its full fury on thousands of unsuspecting people" (65). Chester argues that in the context of the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo, much intervention "stresses scientific initiatives, technology and planning, with responses grounded in theodicy being dismissed as signs of backwardness; even of shame" (322).

level. Framed by the canyon, all that Jonalyn and her father hear are the sound of the prayer from the mountain and the sound of the river. The prayer echoes the difficulty in finding Jonalyn's grandfather and the greater desperation of Jonalyn to help educate the Aetas: it is against the river's current (Figure 7). In another scene, once already in the mountain with other Aetas, Jonalyn stops her father before he proceeds further into the search. She tells him that they pray first to Apo Namalyari. They kneel on the lahar-covered ground, raise their hands to the sky, and Jonalyn's father says "I'm calling on you, Apo Namalyari. I pray that my father is safe. He's been gone for three days. I hope to find him soon." They do not find him in their search but he shows up in the precinct the next day to fetch Jonalyn who is waiting for him to arrive.

Figure 7. Against the river's current; *Manoro* (2006) by Brillante Mendoza

The prayer in the mountain which is the terminal space of their search culminates the mapping of the landscape and establishes that the Aetas dwell on a sacred space based on the spiritual regard that they possess toward to the environment. Apo Namalyari is site specific. Pinatubo is central to the Aeta cosmos.

The documentary aesthetics of *Manoro* as a narrative ecocinema plays an important role in articulating the direness and urgency of the Aeta situation towards its audience. Mendoza employs extreme long shots, panoramic shots, and open framing to establish the interrelationship of the Aetas with their land as signified by the tiny figures of Jonalyn and her father against the white vastness of the Pinatubo landscape. The landscapes seem uninhabitable, alienating, barren. This depiction combined with a raw documentary approach places the audience in an uncomfortable vista in connection to the land. Beth Berila in "Engaging the Land/Positioning the Spectator" observes how narrative films often put the viewers "in a dominating and colonizing relationship to the land" while the environmental justice documentaries present an "oppositional gaze" through which filmmakers and community activists ''talk back'' to the dominant colonizing gaze. In doing so, the documentaries produce counternarratives around environmental degradation and challenge viewers to read against the grain of dominant representations of nature in film" (116-117). While mainstream cinema entertains by creating a neat storyline, documentaries go beyond—and sometimes opposite to—entertainment, drawing the viewers to contemplate on content and message. Mendoza strategically blurs and bends the line between documentary and fiction in *Manoro,* immersing and alienating the viewers at the same time. To make the audience realize their

complicity of neglect, *Manoro* allows them an introspection of the plight of the Aetas but from the remote anthropological position of an outsider. The strategy of presenting a crude picture reproduces a realistic situation of a minority in their unglamorized environment for a distantiated audience that is the hegemony in Philippine society. Mendoza effectively frames the narrative by opening the film with a preface explaining how the indigenous community comprise the majority of more than six million people who are illiterate in the Philippines and highlights how NGOs taught teenage Aetas to read, write, and count after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991. These Aetas taught their elders how to write their names which enabled them to participate in the National Election in 1992. This historical information conditions the viewer that the film that follows is an elucidation of the fact. The truth claim is further strengthened by the film's docu-fictional elements such as the opening sequence that is an actual footage of Jonalyn Ablong's graduation in the lowland. Non-Aeta parents and Aetas with their young children stand and wait outside the ceremonial venue. The camera records in high-angle shot an actual crying of an Aeta toddler being shushed by his mother, an eye level medium shot of an Aeta mother braiding her daughter's hair, a medium shot of Jonalyn's father looking through the coop fence, then in low angle medium shot the camera pans on bystanders' legs and feet in shoes and slippers, then on Jonalyn putting on her feet some white socks. Then the marching, the speeches, the photo ops, children in a real fight. This opening sequence establishes the documentary tone of the entire film though many of the scenes that follow later are dramatized. The excess of information with unfiltered incidental noise is replicated in the election sequence which appears to be a combination

of actual election footage and some performance, especially the part when Jonalyn assists her parents in finding their names, thumb printing in the master list, and writing the candidates' names on the ballot. Furthermore, the Ablong family, comprising Jonalyn, her father Edgar, her mother Carol, her grandfather Carlito, and her five siblings play as themselves. Mendoza retained their names and the integrity of their family relations giving the viewer a feel of the film's being privy to their lives.

Manoro deliberately and unapologetically effects its boredom as a mode to contemplate on the Aeta situation and to immerse the audience on the banality of their everyday life. The boredom that *Manoro* creates on the audience is due to an off-beat pacing of the narrative, seemingly random cuts, treatment of some scenes as found footage, long takes and non-acting that put the audience in an uncomfortable duration, a mode necessary to distantiate the audience from and therefore ponder on the post-eruption world of the Aetas. Emre Çağlayan in "The Aesthetics of Boredom" writes that slow films "use long takes and dedramatization to create dead time, where narrative causality and progress are abandoned to facilitate contemplative viewing" (63). While most feature films of dominant cinema exhibit fear of boredom, slow cinema welcomes boredom to give its audience a distinct temporal engagement. "Boring" films can "perform the important cultural role of encouraging us to reflect on the limited time-span of our lives" (Misek 777).

By using the documentary aesthetics, *Manoro* enters a state of liminality, that is, by being a fiction film that uses verite and documentary style, it effectively invites questions on realism, representation, and the subject-position of Mendoza as a non-Aeta.

The strong truth-claim of the material taps into the ethnographic tradition of cinema. The use of long take by Mendoza gestures to the film's affinity with a tradition in ethnographic cinema where the long take was both an aesthetic manipulation and an answer to a complex anthropological question on method. The long take as an aesthetic style figures prominently in one of the earliest documentary film, Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922). David MacDougall writes that *Nanook* though an ethnographic film was in fact staged or dramatized. The structure of the documentary was crucial in establishing and developing the characters, Nanook and his family, against the antagonist that is the Arctic environment by putting them in considerable duration that creates dramatic tension and curiosity on the audience (103). This aesthetic choice was also employed by John Marshall in *A Joking Relationship* (1962) to "reveal or demonstrate the cultural basis of interpersonal behavior…[and]… access to the emotional life of the people through their portrayals of characteristic social interactions, which are allowed to play out as much as possible in real time" (115-116). Robert Young in *Cortile Cascino* (1962) structures the scenes carefully and uses the long take and the unobtrusive camera for the audience to establish an intimacy with the main subject (116). In his reading of Jean Rouch's *Moi, Un Noir* (1957), MacDougall points out the mingling of fiction and reality through the act of dramatization, a case that is also observable in *Manoro,* only that *Manoro* is a fiction that documentarizes while the above examples are documentaries that fictionalize. Whichever way, what happens is that "fiction is not simply fiction: it becomes reality in the formation of consciousness. And it is a significant feature of this liminal world" (111). Furthermore, the long take was an answer to a

complex problem in anthropology that sought for a faithful rendition of accounts of people's cultural practices which previously based conclusions on snippets and fragments of images in the field. This was solved most profoundly in the observational documentary which did not only show spontaneity of life but presented to the audience sufficient evidence to understand the larger analysis suggested by the films through the long take. The filmmakers sought to "render faithfully the natural sounds, structure and duration of events" (MacDougall 126) such as what can be seen in John Marshall's *An Argument About a Marriage* (1969), Roger Sandall's *Emu Ritual at Ruguri* (1969), and Timothy Asch's *The Feast* (1970). This makes cinéma vérité a hallmark of the ethnographic film that traces back to the early motion studies of Eadweard Muybridge (1887) and Etienne-Jules Marey (1883) to accurately capture the movement of animals and peoples (126).

Mendoza's decision to choose the hybrid aesthetics between cinema vérité and documentary in determining the look of *Manoro* and in representing the Aetas requires a discussion of how cinema vérité and the modern documentary are in themselves rife with contentions. While I describe how *Manoro* may be effective through these cinematic strategies, I suggest that *Manoro* as a venue of representation be read to espouse a *brand* of realism instead of taking the fictional film to be real. Bazin, in his early theory that praises the power of photography and cinema in laying bare reality, writes that "photography and cinema satisfies our obsession with realism" (7). The essence of cinema is its realism, a style which includes the "long take, deep focus, limited editing,… use of non-professional, or at least relatively unknown actors" ("Theories of Realism"), all of which are found in *Manoro*. While photography has a capacity to seemingly

objectively capture objects, the image of these objects are of course already constructs. A fictional film like *Manoro* while effectively strong in its truth claim because of vérité and documentary style is in danger of being taken, as it is, to be a recording of actual and real Aeta experience.

Cinema vérité is a French term for true cinema or cinema truth. Cinema vérité is a style in nonfiction filmmaking that is very close to Bazinian realism but with some additional elements such as portable sound equipment, handheld camera, and impromptu interviews which in turn are carried over in the aesthetics of the modern documentary ("Cinéma vérité"). It became a popular style in the 1960s which observed and recorded natural actions and unscripted dialogues thereby achieving a deeper degree of realism such as what can be seen in the films of Chris Marker and Jean Rouch. While it is thought of as a cinema of truth, cinema vérité must be regarded as a film of its own truth, not necessarily representing *the* truth but *a* truth, that is, putting into question the strategies and schemes in how a film constructs its version of truth. When cinema vérité claims to record the truth of the character's life or take a raw footage or interview, the presence of the camera or the filmmaker may have already affected the rawness of the moment. As the material goes through editing and arrives at its final form, real-life has already passed through the filmmaker's interpretation. Michael Chanan raises this problem of transparency as he asserts that the final product is merely one version of truth or what could have been, the other versions are left in the cutting room (87). Cinema vérité's goal to be objective, in the words of Stephen Mamber, is unattainable "given that no film can ever break down completely the barrier between the real world and the screen

world" (Hall 25). When it claims to invoke unguarded emotions and real situations, it could be manipulative and exploitative of its subjects who may suffer the consequences of such cinematic act ("Film School Essentials: Cinema Vérité"). The appeal to transparency and the pretense of non-manipulation may "foster a dangerous false consciousness" among the viewers (Jay Ruby qtd. in Hall 26).

Mendoza as an outsider to the Aeta culture as his subjects is marked by racial politics and raises the conundrum of who gets to film who. While *Manoro* comments on the Aeta situation, the aesthetic strategies as to how these comments are made can rehearse the dominant culture's ways of demeaning or marginalizing minority cultures. For example, during Jonalyn's graduation with all its attendant chaos in and out of the ceremonial hall, the camera pans on the wall posting that says "Bawat Graduate — Bayani at Marangal" [Every graduate is a hero and an honorable Filipino] and in the final shot of the film, the camera lingers on the text at the back of the shirt of a dancing Aeta boy that says "Babangon and Pilipinas" [The Philippines will recover]. While these texts that are underlined in the opening and final sequences of the film can be read to express hope for better prospects for the Aetas, the contexts of these shots with their associative details make them ironic. The vision of the Department of Education articulated on the wall certainly has not been met in the way many of the graduates are robbed of the opportunity to continue beyond elementary education. Judging by the corrupt mechanics of the election, "Babangon ang Pilipinas" is likewise an empty rhetoric. Kimberly Chabot Davis, commenting on the dangers of the use of cinematic irony by white filmmakers with minority subjects, writes that even though cinematic irony can be a powerful tool for

minorities to use among themselves, it can create a troubling distance when used by dominant cultures (27-28). According to Linda Hutcheon, it can be weaponized to keep the minority culture subservient since observational and ethnographic strategies are positions of power and are therefore not innocent of racial politics. How then do we place Mendoza belonging to a dominant culture within the act of representing the Aetas as a minority? If *Manoro* is emphasized as fiction and is thus not to be taken as real but a mere representation of a culture, does this absolve Mendoza from possible misrepresentation, if there is any? Should films made about a culture be made only by those who belong to that culture? Might Mendoza's position function as a conduit to construct a sensitivity and awareness of the dominant culture to the plight of their cultural Other, a symptom of the national unconscious of Mendoza, that is, the desire to bring into the national body the minority through integrative institutional methods such as formal education and exercise of suffrage? Mendoza has openly and unproblematically stated that his films are not for his filmic subjects who are often poor and disenfranchised but for the middle class. In a rather confrontational interview with Tilman Baumgartel which probed into Mendoza's subject position as a middle class filming the poor, Brillante Mendoza, with his long time collaborator, Armando Lao, openly expressed how their themes and subject matters capture the lives of the poor, being representatives of how life is in the Philippines (163). That the Philippines figures as one big slum to the international audience is something that Mendoza claims to serve what those audience want to see. To show poverty in the Philippines is something the Filipinos do not like as it

is already an everyday experience. The Filipinos yearn for alternative images other than images of destitution (164). According to Mendoza,

> these films might be about the lower classes, and it is their stories we are telling, but these films are not *for* them. Our films are for the middle class and the educated people. We discovered that these films are really for the students. Lately, with our kind of films, and the other indie films, the main audience is really the students, because they are able to interpret these films. 163

The documentary approach of Mendoza comments on the country's sordid social realities especially those experienced by the marginalized. The social problems are so deeply ingrained in the society that they have become the Filipino fact of life (Valerio 48). *Manoro* immerses the audience to this Aeta fact of life by altering the audience's perception of time. The boredom caused by dead time in *Manoro* is further heightened by what Michael Billig calls banal nationalism, "a range of means of evoking nationhood without engaging in explicit nationalist rhetoric" (Kääpä 146). As a subaltern culture betrayed by the nation-state, the Aetas in *Manoro* participate in a national election in a disorganized and trivial manner, capitalizing on their population as voters but downplaying their stakes as citizens. For example, a long sequence showing Jonalyn and her family looking for their names in the master list of voters spans almost four minutes. It shows a child Aeta trampling on pamphlets, an old Aeta walking barefoot over the pamphlets, the Aetas lining up in front of the master list on the wall whose names they could not recognize or find, Jonalyn and her family arriving and joining the Aetas to

search for their names. The school that serves as the poll precinct, the classrooms where the Aetas wait in their ennui outside, the list that does not reveal their names as voters, these function as apparatuses of the mechanical electoral process of the nation-state that includes Aetas as voters but excludes them as citizens by not according them the same attention and privilege given to the mainstream majority. The Aetas are a surplus people who are not assimilated into and are displaced by the amalgamation of the nation towards a coherent body. In *Manoro*, banal nationalism is a critique on the situation of indigenous people who are treated as unassimilable remainder outside the imaginary of the national political and cultural space, an erasure that needs to be embedded back to the national imaginary of the Filipinos through a signifying practice such as ecocinema to reframe the problem of the minorities as a problem of the nation.

As an independent film and ecocinema, *Manoro* faces the challenges to further the reach of distribution and access as well as train its audience to appreciate and engage with the material. *Manoro* is marginalized by mainstream local and international cinema as independent films are rarely shown in movie houses and seldom distributed by record companies.[30] The socially relevant content of these films alternatively permeate the national imagination through regional film festival and film fora that continuously draw

[30] The year 2006 when Manoro came out was a time when independent cinema in the Philippines has not yet achieved the high level of access and engagement that characterizes it today which is a result of sustained workshops, grants, productions, film festivals, archives, fora, and educational viewing sites taking place in different regions in the Philippines. A separate study of these festival circuits and the way these films are presented, discussed and received will yield insights to their impact and usefulness, especially on the unique themes and images that they contain in relation to specific local and national issues.

their niche audience.[31] However, the long-term effect of exposure to mainstream movies and teleseryes may have caused the general audience to develop a lack of acuity of perception which can otherwise be cultivated given a constant exposure to independent films. Jason Paul Laxamana, an independent filmmaker who has followed *Manoro* from when it came out in 2006 to seeing it again in an alternative film house, observes the audience's poor reception of the the film ("Brillante Mendoza's 'Manoro' and the Captive Audience"). In 2009, during the Holy Angel University Days, the film was again shown to almost a thousand students whom Laxamana heard were captive audience. The boredom the students got from the film was evident in how they sunk on their seats especially during those parts when Jonalyn and her father were just walking and walking in the mountains. Laxamana heard that the students were "forced to pay fifty pesos, watch the movie, and perhaps whip up a decent reaction paper that would fulfill their partial requirements in their respective classes." They were apparently not ready to follow the narrative and digest the film in its crude and unappealing photography.

That *Manoro* succeeded in creating boredom was not enough to deeply engage its young audience with the issues it tackles. To use that boredom as a means to foster criticality was the bigger aim that the film as an ecocinema with alternative aesthetics might have failed to achieve. Though the use of documentary style in fictional films is no longer considered avant-garde, its familiarity status in Philippine cinema is quite unpopular, especially to an an audience conditioned by decades of formulaic mainstream

[31] During lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, many more independent films were made available to public in streaming sites such as YouTube and Vimeo to raise funds that supported medical front liners and film workers as well as to aid viewers with entertainment during quarantines.

media products. David Ingram in “The Aesthetics and Ethics of Eco-film Criticism” probes into the important question of what works for the audience to acquire an ecological understanding through ecocinema. Is there a particular style or genre or taste that appeals more to the audience (43)? Ingram asserts that it might just be wishful thinking to assume that as a result of avant-garde techniques, the audience acquiring a “more acute sensory awareness will in and of itself lead to better attitudes and behavior towards our environment.” There is no assurance that long or slow takes, for example, are effective in fostering ecological awareness since one has to consider the existing taste, training, or education of the audience (47). For *Manoro,* it was obvious that the film is still in search of an audience that can appreciate its aesthetics and digest its content. Ingram echoes the point of Noel Caroll that avant-garde cinema merely exemplifies a theory that is understood only by the cineastes, thus “preaching to the converted” (48). It is important for filmmakers to pay attention to general audience responses and if these responses indeed lead to positive attitudes toward environmental and cultural issues (49). It is not enough that ecofilms function to critique environmental issues with the hope that they raise consciousness. They must also cater to the taste and level of training of the audience that is largely conditioned by mainstream modes of spectatorship and aesthetics, a dialectical relationship that can be fostered through an artistic compromise and the audience's higher self-legibility in the films. Andrew Hageman notes that “films do not themselves possess agency. We are affected by film, but the affect hinges upon how we recognize ourselves, our culture, and our society refracted in these films” (77). The constitutive and constituted ideologies that shape film production, distribution,

consumption, and representation must be investigated to further understand how ecocinema can effectively take a form compatible with audience cognition.

In 2012, *Manoro* resurfaces again this time in *YouTube* where comments from Grade 8 students express the pressure of watching the film for a periodical exam, a research paper, a criticism, a report. What this means though in terms of viewership is that being in *YouTube* liberates the film from inaccessibility and finally finds the audience whom it must reach. The film had been embedded in the syllabi of high school students in the Philippines making *Manoro* an educational tool that is, aptly, about education. Given the right intervention of teachers, this reflexive nature of *Manoro* can become a powerful teaching material as young students learn about the plight of their cultural *other*, the importance of education, and the interrelationship of indigenous people with their land, at a time when their sense of cultural sensitivity and political correctness are still malleable for cultivation. The constant non-stereotypical visibility of the Aetas in relation to their environment year after year of viewing by high school students is an important step in fostering a viewing culture well-versed with alternative styles of filmmaking and in establishing ecocinema as a genre worthy of critical and pedagogical attention in the Philippines.

In 2018, *Pabaon sa Buhay (Protection for Life)*, a soap advertisement directed by Pepe Diokno went viral in social media and has currently reached 6.5 million views in *YouTube*. The advertisement, based on the life of Norman King, the first Aeta to graduate in the country's premier university, has high production value and was shot using the techniques of mainstream filmmaking. The ad opens with a medium long shot of

Norman, standing still and looking at a blurred building with a crowd moving forward in both sides of the frame all dressed up for an occasion. Norman is wearing his *bahag*, a traditional Aeta garb, with his back from the camera. The next shot is a close up of Norman's bare foot stepping against a dark concrete. The security guard asks him where he is going and Norman shows him his ID card. Norman is attending his graduation ceremony. What follows are alternating scenes of Norman as a spectacle in the graduation venue: the crowd's discomfort with what Norman is wearing, their comment on his being an Aeta, on Norman looking "authentic"—and his life in the mountain growing up with financial hardship and insecurity of his identity as he progresses in his education. Through Norman's eyeline match, we see Norman's younger self and his mother—a familiar face—but she is no longer young as the first time she appears in *Manoro* in 2006. Jonalyn Ablong comes back in a more widely circulated media, this time casted as Norman's mother. She washes young Norman's dirty hands and explains to the boy who is wondering if the Aeta soil-complexion is the reason why they are called dirty. The mother answers: "Ang taong madumi ay ang taong hindi malinis ang puso"/ "The unclean person is one whose heart is not clean". Throughout the ad, Jonalyn's character admonishes Norman to persevere and accept his identity. The narrative ends with the crowd applauding Norman on stage as he receives his diploma. The comments on the video reveal how consistently the ad has delivered a piercing awareness on the plight of the Aetas to the audience and how most of them are moved by the narrative.

The soap commercial promotes a success narrative—the myth of hard work, perseverance, and self-acceptance—but does not escape from prevailing stereotypes. The

material is highly affective because Norman King is singularized and therefore embodies the audience's universal desire to succeed. The pressing social issues apart from the crises of poverty and skin color are absent and Norman King is singled out as an exceptional individual whose struggles are based on and interpellate stereotypical assumptions about the Aetas—understandable for the nature of this material as a promotional product. What this ad glosses over is the complexity and magnitude of the Aeta struggle that has no room for a product such as this, one that simplifies success to only require an acceptance of the Aeta identity and effectively capitalizes on their poverty and discrimination to win the sympathy, and therefore, the patronage of the consumer. While *Pabaon sa Buhay* and *Manoro* allow the Aetas to play their own lives, carry over Jonalyn Ablong's textuality in both media, and emphasize the importance of education, acceptance of Aeta identity, and the value of perseverance as crucial elements to their integration and survivance in Philippine society, the methods in which they are organize, setup, consumed, exploited, or lionized perpetually demand critical scrutiny.

Though *Manoro* presents the disturbing social realities of the Aetas, it highlights the empowerment of an indigenous person in the midst of challenging situations. The Aetas survive just as they have resisted extinction for thousands of years. In the middle of Jonalyn's journey in Pinatubo, Mendoza shows Jonalyn and her father taking off their slippers and spends a total of fifty-five seconds following and focusing on Jonalyn's black feet getting whiter and whiter as she steps on white earth, moments before they reach the higher ground where she and her father will pray to Apo Namalyari. As the terrains become difficult to traverse, the two Aetas take away what is supposed to protect

their feet from the ground and walk barefoot to show the inherent power of their black feet stepping on the sacred grounds previously trodden by their ancestors who roamed their land sovereign and free. Walking barefoot literalizes the connection of Jonalyn to the land of her ancestry, re-mapping a contested ground complicated by colonial geography. Jonalyn in her visual act of re-mapping unsettles these colonial geographies as the low-angle of the camera places the audience on the level of the white ground to gaze at the sole of the Aetas in search of their elder, an assertion of sovereignty over the hegemony that is taking away their land. Black feet on white earth is Jonalyn's grounding on Aeta tradition within a changing environment, the position of survivance and empowerment which the Aetas must take in order to persist in the neocolonialist and capitalist-driven Philippine society. Jonalyn's agency as a modern Aeta operates from a temporality of *in-between-ness*, her identity a negotiation in the same way that the situation of the Aetas with the many indigenous communities in the Philippines is precariously changing: their identity, survival, and fate in the present century is perpetually threatened by forces whose influence they cannot stop but must weather. In mythology, black bodies on white earth is a consequence of the fury of Apo Namalyari and yet, it is also his gift: the white lahar that now covers the Pinatubo is considered one of the most powerful of soils in the world valued for its capacity to accumulate organic carbon, nitrogen, large volume of water, and improve water quality—factors that make it suitable for vegetation and growth (Shoji and Takahashi 113). The challenge that remains is for the Aetas to not only exercise autonomy and freedom over their land and secure the

empowerment necessary to thrive on a now fertile earth but also uphold the sovereignty to construct themselves and tell their own stories from their own perspective.

CHAPTER IV

ANCHORED ON WATER, FLOATING ON LAND: LITTORAL SOVEREIGNTY OF THE BADJAO, SEA GYPSIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Water closes its own wounds. This is how I remember that moment: my eight year-old self standing behind the railing of a small ferry about to leave the seaport, in my right hand a plastic bag with a janitor fish, a gift for my brother that will clean his aquarium once I get home; my left hand in my pocket searching for coins to throw into the sea. A few Badjao children surround the ferry—their hair burning gold in the sun, their dark brown bodies glistening, bobbing in the water—waiting for passengers to throw coins. The farther the passengers throw the coins, the better. The Badjao children swim and follow the coin, search for it underneath, and in less than a minute, rise to the surface and wave the coin to the coin-throwing passenger. I throw my coin as far as I can and a Badjao boy, probably my age, swims to it. He does not show up even after a few minutes. I wait and wait for the boy to appear, clutching firmly the plastic bag with the janitor fish. My body begins to tremble with guilt and power, feelings I could hardly name at this time, coiling like barbed wire in my gut. After some time, the boy, coin in hand, emerges from the water, engulfs a large amount of air, and gives me a salute for a thank you. I breathe deeply and realize I have been holding my breath for a while, too. Mother sees what I am doing. She says this throwing of coins should stop or the Badjaos will never learn to find other means to live. Means to live. What does it mean to have means to live? I ask the question looking at those dark bodies getting smaller as the ferry leaves, as the froth dies back to a calm surface after the ferry parts the waves, always,

after some distance. That day was my first vivid encounter with the Badjao, also called Sama Dilaut, a Muslim indigenous community known as the sea-gypsies of Southeast Asia.

Twenty years later, I am confronted by the same ambivalence regarding the agency and survival of the subaltern tribe. My optics[32] have been conditioned over the years by images of the Badjao begging in city streets: a young mother with a sleeping infant in her arms; boys and girls performing dance and making music for passengers caught in infernal traffic, courting accidents on the road with their tiny drums; families sleeping in the gutters, or under the bridge—hundreds of miles away from their originary seas of Sulu and the Celebes, south of the Philippine archipelago, whose waters are part of their identity and sustenance as a seafaring tribe. Another time my uncle comes home to see his house being *looted* by a group of Badjao who claim that what they are taking are theirs—clothes, pots and pans, car tools, copper wires, food. An altercation takes place and leads to violence. My uncle, outnumbered, decides to let his stuff go. He knows it does not make sense to call the police or explain to the Badjao the concept of ownership or rights over property, right there and then. It does not mean that my uncle is wise or forgiving or generous, he simply realizes the probable reason behind the Badjaos' entitlement and their refusal to give back what they believe is theirs. How indeed can he incriminate for theft those who have been systemically dispossessed of life and habitat by the state for several decades? Those that the state has neglected but govern and interpellate only symbolically? Those that have been framed as aberrations of civil

[32] I use optics interchangeably to mean image as well as one's perspective of the image.

society so that the state as a form of legitimate order can come into being? Though I have no right to speak for the Badjao, I take the risk in suggesting that their claim is political—a defiance against the law as a state mechanism which *must* have no power over them, that is, because the law's benevolent power to ensure their rights as citizens is withheld, state law cancels its legitimacy to enact its discipline. I recall Moten and Harney's concept of the undercommons in which subjects inhabit the chaos in the now, not as outside law or order but in the very condition of it, that is, the undercommons' refusal to any form of legibility—their illegibility or incomprehensibility—their resistance to order and being the disorder that dominant optics see as the threat, is in fact not the threat. The real threat is the order which the undercommons surround. Disorder surrounding, and its many enactments that signify—the furtherance of it as the only chance—of the possibility to re-world a society, a society ordered as such that has rendered other lives unlivable. For

> the undercommons is not a realm where we rebel and we create critique; it is not a place where we "take arms against a sea of troubles/and by opposing end them." The undercommons is a space and time which is always here. Our goal – and the "we" is always the right mode of address here – is not to end the troubles but to end the world that created those particular troubles as the ones that must be opposed. Moten and Harney refuse the logic that stages refusal as inactivity, as the absence of a plan and as a mode of stalling real politics. Halberstam 9

The state that has amalgamated into a form of order, isomorphic to the metaphorical colonial fortress described by Moten and Harney being surrounded by chaos, is the sign and cause of chaos: within, around, and elsewhere (17). The undercommons do not create an originary struggle against the government, the government creates the struggle through its oppressive techniques. It manufactures crises which it cannot solve (57). Democracy is surrounded, hijacked from the margins, to expose its falseness so that

> Every time it tries to enclose us in a decision, we're undecided. Every time it tries to represent our will, we're unwilling. Every time it tries to take root, we're gone (because we're already here, moving). We ask and we tell and we cast the spell that we are under, which tells us what to do and how we shall be moved, here, where we dance the war of apposition. We're in a trance that's under and around us. We move through it and it moves with us, out beyond the settlements, out beyond the redevelopment, where black night is falling, where we hate to be alone, back inside to sleep till morning, drink till morning, plan till morning, as the common embrace, right inside, and around, in the surround. 19

Another time, in 2016, as a means to work out my confusion regarding the agency of the Badjaos, I wrote a paper as a polemic on the portrayal of a Muslim Badjao woman in a film by Brillante Mendoza titled *Thy Womb* (2012). Shaleha, the lead character, is a community midwife and elder who is past child-bearing age in Simunul, Tawi-tawi, a tiny Badjao village at the southernmost tip of the Philippines. In her pursuit to provide a child for her husband Bangas-An, Shaleha searches for a second wife and agrees to be

banished from her marriage should the new wife, Mersila, succeeds in giving Bangas-An a son. Mersila asks for Shaleha's banishment as a specific condition and part of her dower. I argued that such agency perpetuates the negative stereotype of the Filipino Muslim woman as subordinate to their husband and social customs. Shaleha as a subject in pursuit of fulfilling her desire represented an oppressed individual contained within a patriarchy intensified by a blind subscription to a religious belief.

There are three things in error in my analysis. First, I slipped into narrowly situating Shaleha's agency within Islam in articulating her oppression. The framework was underdetermined, yet again a result of my biased perception as an outsider, being part of a culture dominating a society where Muslims and indigenous peoples in the Philippines are not only a minority but perpetually systematically minoritized, that is, they are not only a minority in numbers but minoritized as an effect of the exclusionary and discriminating mechanics of the Philippine state. It was symptomatic of the rigid ways of how the nation-state obsesses in fixities of identity categories as the skewed logic of (mis)managing its populations. Second, my analysis of the gaze and visual pleasure based on Mulvey[33] did not account for the politics that Mendoza, an upper class Manila-based director who has an international following and is geographically and culturally

[33] According to Laura Mulvey in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," the woman "stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning" (834). Mulvey enumerates two types of pleasures offered by cinema. The first type is the function of the sexual instinct called scopophilia, the pleasure one generates in looking as well as in being looked at. The woman then assumes the role of to-be-looked-at-ness (843). Freud explains that this pleasure is derived from seeing others as objects under a curious and controlling gaze such as the early voyeurism in children who are curious to see the human private parts and their function (835). Carried to the extreme, the drive becomes a perversion. Mulvey describes that the darkness in the auditorium creates the atmosphere where the voyeur can drift in anonymity between himself and the performer in front of him to whom he projects his repressed desire (836). The second pleasure derived from cinema is a process of identification that occurs with the image on screen. The woman is the image and the man is the owner of the gaze who projects his phantasy on the woman (837). In a sense, the male gaze plays an active role in forwarding the narrative.

removed from the Badjao community, may bring into his representation of the subaltern group. Third, my reading of Shaleha's body being barren failed to go beyond the larger discourse of her figure as a social body, of the Badjao as sea-gypsies who do not assimilate and integrate with the Philippine nation-state by dis-identifying and simultaneously being unrecognized as Filipino citizens. In my myopic sense, Shaleha's barren body literalizes the failure of fertility, therefore of futurity, while as a social body, Shaleha makes possible the dynamic life of a subaltern community that insists to survive in ways that the state finds difficult to comprehend, a guarantee of a future that resolves the general crisis of hegemonic imagination. As a corrective, I anchor my present position that Shaleha's agency must be analyzed as a performative discourse—mapping the different analytic axes that make possible her emergence as a subject—on Saba Mahmood's *Politics of Piety* where Mahmood maintains that "in order for an individual to be free, her actions must be the consequence of her "own will" rather than of custom, tradition, or social coercion. To the degree that autonomy in this tradition of liberal political theory is a *procedural* principle, and not an ontological or substantive feature of the subject, it delimits the necessary condition for the enactment of the ethics of freedom" (11). I take cue from the position of Mahmood: I move away from Islam as the overall analytical premise of Shaleha's identity and instead emphasize intersectionality in my analysis to account for the secular differentiation within the lives of Muslim women and avoid homogenizing and essentializing their identity. Haideh Moghissi problematizes the totalizing tendency in the way academics and media people regard Muslim women's lives because it flattens the diverse identity markers of women in terms of ethnicity, economic

status, urban or rural location, etc. To totalize means to undermine the different voices of women that strive for better conditions for themselves and lose sight of the larger overlapping factors that determine for them the nuances of freedom and oppression—two concepts I take to be not diametrically opposed or separate from each other. Moghissi argues that the totalizing tendency imposes pressure on Muslim women to identify or represent themselves "within" their culture which is immediately confined to being a Muslim rather than being a sum of what make them who they are, including the secularist activities that they enact on a daily basis. For example, in an anthropological study by Lila Abu-Lughod, she tells the story of an Egyptian woman named Zainab who explains that women of her kind in Southern Egypt are suffering not because of Islam but because of the government (1). Moghissi emphasizes that feminism has a broad spectrum and not all activities resistant in nature can be considered feminist if the intention and content of agency are not by women and for women. Moghissi reiterates that "feminism represents a moral vision and a movement central to which are the struggles for personal and social transformation and activism on behalf of individual women and women as a group to change legal and cultural constraints and gender practices in favor of women" (79). This argument expands the analysis from the religious dimension of subjects in explaining their conflicts and tensions to be able to consider that their suffering and agency are caused by a complex of identity markers. This present move has three objectives. One, Shaleha as a subaltern subject wields power when the locus of oppression is decentered from her religion and the definition of oppression is re-worked. Who defines oppression? What is the structure of oppression and freedom, that is, how can the two meld in the

same subjective-objective instance? Two, intersectionality dismantles the hegemonic gaze that stereotypes Muslim women as oppressed individuals. It accounts for an interplay of forces responsible for her subjection. Three, intersectionality frees up the analysis to an expanding discussion on how Shaleha's infertile body is a paradox of the survivance of the Badjao as a social body. It effectively establishes that *Thy Womb* is treated in this chapter not as a medium that represents or mirrors the Badjao situation but a method that criticizes and challenges it. These objectives serve as trellis to the larger goal of this chapter which is to demonstrate that *Thy Womb* sutures the method of Shaleha's exclusion from the marital institution with the grammar of exclusion of the Badjao by the postcolonial Philippine nation. I argue further that this exclusion, instead of being unidirectionally effected by the nation-state, is agentially met and enacted by the Badjao who remain temporally incommensurable—competing and simultaneous with the sovereignty of the nation-state. The Badjao assert to live fluidly through what I call littoral sovereignty which I propose as the freedom to uphold the political, economic, and cultural rights over their ancestral waters. As a recognition of this rootednesss on water, littoral sovereignty influences the way the Badjao behave when they inhabit inland. Littoral sovereignty challenges traditional optics on indigeneity as always previously defined by inhabiting land—thus politically and legally operating within state sovereignty —but never as fluid, continuous, expansive, rough and undulating, empowering such as ocean waters. Littoral sovereignty critiques the nation-state's interventions that deal with water-based subalterns through modernist methods such as sedentarization that fail to comprehend their worlding, their ways of being, living, feeling, thinking.

If desire is autonomous and central to the emergence of a free subject, what does it mean for a subject to suffer for such a desire? When does suffering become oppression? Who defines what oppression is? These are questions I ask myself when I imagine Shaleha, surrendering into crisis my position as a scholar who is non-Muslim, one outside the Badjao community who does not share largely the marginalization that they undergo and therefore whose claim to speak is metonymic. Like many scholars educated from the West, I have acquired the propensity to investigate for modes of resistance, ways of subversion, or open defiance to the socio-cultural parameters that account for the oppression of Shaleha, (or perhaps for the many Muslim women who became my good friends when I lived for seven years in the Islamic City of Marawi as an undergraduate student and literature teacher—women who fell into their lot of arranged marriages, sometimes against their will). Abu-Lughod writes that after the 9-11 terror attack, "the images of Muslim women became connected to a mission to rescue them from their cultures" (6-7). This was in fact my position even before 9-11 happened when I was still in Marawi. My present inquiry on freedom and oppression of Muslim women probably stems from this guilt in the first place, the guilt of participating in the rescue mission that Abu-Lughod speaks of—my act of scholarship as an intervention is highly suspect of this national (and moral) unconscious that does not only plague the filmmakers that I study but myself as an intense looker of culture. What am I looking for in the images? To what end? Abu Lughod reminds that

> we must situate such images and ground our thinking about the meanings of freedom in the everyday lives of individuals, on the one hand, and the

> imperial politics of intervention, on the other. We will find that it is rarely a case of being free or oppressed, choosing or being forced. Representations of the unfreedom of others that blame the chains of culture incite rescue missions by outsiders. Such representations mask the histories of internal debate and institutional struggles over justice that have occurred in every nation. They also deflect attention from the social and political forces that are responsible for the ways people live. 20

Grappling with concepts of agency, freedom, and oppression, I came across Saba Mahmood's work, which, drawing from the analytic methods of Foucault and Butler, answers to many feminists that question Muslim women in the present time who, accorded with better emancipatory means, willingly subject themselves to the grand patriarchy of Islam which *puts* them into bondage (1). Mahmood describes the women's mosque movement of Egypt as an uncomfortable inquiry within feminist scholarship since the subjects that act in accordance with Islamic piety perpetuate the notion of women as occupying a subordinate status, intensifying the movement's association with "fundamentalism, the subjugation of women, social conservatism, reactionary atavism, cultural backwardness" (4-5). It is on this polemic that Mahmood's position is built as a means to reinscribe the agency of these pious women in the movement. Mahmood explains that the Western conception of agency varies in definition with the agency that her project articulates: [Western] "agency, in this form of analysis, is understood as the capacity to realize one's own interests against the weight of custom, tradition, transcendental will, or other obstacles (whether individual or collective). Thus the

humanist desire for autonomy and self-expression constitutes the substrate, the slumbering ember that can spark to flame in the form of an act of resistance when conditions permit" (8). This kind of agency equates with resistance, one that goes against the flow but fails to account for the agency that operates within a configuration necessary for a society to function, where roles are defined, embraced, and performed by its free agents. To insist for agency-as-resistance could mean imposing one's—and probably false—form of consciousness or politics that is not part of the experience of the subjects. This is what Abu Lughod emphasizes in her corrective as she herself, in a previous myopia, attended to acts of resistance and yet failed to understand the mechanism of power which, if sufficiently deconstructed, will reveal its "complex interworkings," a process that counters power reductionism and highlights how subjects choose to freely subject themselves in these interworkings (Mahmood 8-9). Besides, Mahmood asks, "are all feminist desires resistant? a desire to break free from suppression? from male domination?" (10). Abu-Lughod asks the same question: "We should want justice and rights for women, but can we accept that there might be different ideas about justice and that different women might want, or even choose, different futures from ones that we envision as best?" (44). To Wendy Brown, it is only the Harm Principle which is the limit of liberty that is "unimpeded individual sovereignty, pursuit, and choice" (324). Centered on individual moral autonomy, freedom is being able to authorize oneself and one's actions (325). This liberty however is in conflict with religious sovereignty because it requires submission to another authority. Thus the oxymoron that as liberty "secures the citizen from state interference or coercion in the domain of religion, it guarantees the

right to be as religiously unfree as one chooses" (ibid). As one chooses. The operative phrase that emphasizes how subjection is an act of will in which agency and freedom concern with more than just choosing which option is better but which option one chooses to live with for self-subjection requires mastery of one's desire—not necessarily to fulfill but to control it—to become no longer its slave (331). Brown, quoted by Abu-Lughod, writes that even choice is in itself a narrow rubric of freedom: "the extent to which all choice is conditioned by as well as imbricated with power, and the extent to which choice is itself is an impoverished account of freedom" (19). It is within this same grammar that I think of freedom as enacted by Shaleha as an individual and the Badjao as a subaltern body—not freedom *from* the state but freedom to be *with* the state. Freedom in this sense is not severance nor separation, not integration nor assimilation but recognition and protection of sovereignty, of difference. Freedom *with* means a perpetual outsiding to remain inside.

The discursive practice from which Shaleha's agency emerges requires a reworking of the model of power not solely on the basis of domination but on an interworking of forces. Foucault forwards a model of power that "is to be understood as a strategic relation of forces that permeates life and is productive of new forms of desires, objects, relations, and discourses" (Mahmood 17). Within these power relations is the production of the subject, not the other way around where the subject is ontologically and essentially fixed *before* the interwork of power. Foucault describes subjectivation as a paradox in the sense that the subordination of the subject is the same procedural structure by which the subject acquires identity and agency (ibid). Agency is not to be equated with

resistance “but as a capacity for action that specific relations of subordination create and enable” (18). Butler, working in a model similar to Focault, thinks about how the individual enacts the social in the sense that social forces produce the subject and serve as the zone where the subject carries out her agency. Social formations are products of constant enactments making norms and agencies interminably linked (Mahmood 19-20). Thus I articulate Shaleha’s agency within the social forces in which her subjectivity emerges—a continuum and a melding of subject and subjection, enactment and enactedness.

Shaleha's desire and her agency that fulfills it can be mapped within the interwork of religion, gender, ethnicity, and class. As a Muslim, Shaleha’s will to find another wife for Bangas-An is a manifestation of her faith intensified by the conditional permissibility of polygamy in Islamic societies. Shaleha is a devout Muslim as seen in her participation to the community prayer out at sea, worship in the mosque with other Muslim women, and her fervent praying in solitude in her house. Shaleha believes that having a child is Allah’s expression of blessing a family, in a sense completing it. But as a woman, Shaleha feels responsible for the void in her marriage. The fact that it is she who could not bear a child urges her to compensate by finding Bangas-An a second wife. In a patriarchal society that *Thy Womb* depicts, Shaleha is bound to serve her husband to the fullest by giving him a child. While Shaleha moves around with social dexterity, her character is ironically defined by a lack rooted on her body. She has reached past child-bearing age and has accepted the reality that she will never be able to conceive a child. Her maternal nature manifests in the way she takes the role of a midwife in her small

community and how with longing she looks at the growing children of her neighbors. As a Badjao, Shaleha's quest to find a wife for Bangas-An is a step towards producing an offspring that will continue the life of the tribe but the quest complicates due to the implicit hierarchy at work among the Muslim tribes in Southern Philippines where the Badjao are heavily discriminated. Men can only marry within their tribe which narrows the couple's choices. As a result, Shaleha has to scout for women on her list and go through a series of negotiations to find a wife whose dower they can afford. As a poor individual, Shaleha desires for a child who will take care of her and her aging husband in the future. Shaleha subjects herself to hard work and saves what little amount she can to raise the dowry. In the market, she finds a beautiful shawl she really likes but it is too expensive she lets it go. In one long sequence, Shaleha pierces through a labyrinthine path leading to old vendors who sell the cheapest cassava, depicting the narrow, solitary, and dark journey that she takes in the story (Figure 8). Shaleha solicits money from relatives, friends, and elders, surrenders all her jewelry and Bangas-An's watch. Since the amount she raises does not suffice, they sell the motor of their fishing boat and paddle on their way home. All these within Shaleha's prompting. As poor individuals, Shaleha and her husband survive by fishing and selling dried fish in the market, weaving mats and attending to birthing women. They live a simple and frugal life, in a house typical of the Badjaos: over the sea, wooden, rudimentary, and in a cluster with other houses that form a small neighborhood looking like a dark rhizome branching into the water (Figure 9). Emerging from and because of these social forces, Shaleha as an autonomous subject

Figure 8. Shaleha through the labyrinth; *Thy Womb* (2012) by Brillante Mendoza

Figure 9. Littoral dwelling; *Thy Womb* (2012) by Brillante Mendoza

realizes her desire with a determination to carry out her task until its completion. Her agency is marked with fortitude, an inner capacity that manifests into skills and abilities that set her character in motion. Shaleha is an individual who is perpetually moving. Gifted with skills apart from midwifery, Shaleha possesses an extraordinary dexterity in weaving intricately designed mats, a nimbleness in paddling the boat, casting nets and sorting catch, a knack for business, an ability to manage the family's finances, and a capacity to heal Bangas-An's gunshot wound. Shaleha's desire is autonomous because she desires as a free subject, that is, desiring with the knowledge and acceptance of the suffering that accompanies that freedom. Freeing herself from lesser desire that is the fulfillment of her role as a wife, to materialize the greater desire which is securing the futurity of the Badjao, Shaleha decides which sovereign should govern her—beyond patriarchy, religion, ethnicity, poverty—towards an extreme self-subjection from which

her agency emerges, enacted by the final sovereign that is herself. Shaleha's agency emerges not in spite of but because of the oppression that serves as an elemental component which makes complex what it means to be free. To recast the nature of that agency within the mold of resistance invalidates the autonomy from which that agency emanates and in turn disrespects Shaleha as a free subject.

The stereotype that religion oppresses Shaleha is symptomatic of the hegemonic gaze of the mainstream Philippine society that generally denigrates Islam by associating it with terrorism and forced or arranged marriage of its women. Vivienne Angeles, in her survey of Filipino films that portrayed Muslims as central characters, observes how Filipino Muslims are represented as people who believe in their superiority and are violent against women and other people who are non-Muslims (13-14). Angeles takes a sample representative film from each of the political period in the Philippines from 1935 to 2012: *Brides of Sulu* (1934), *The Real Glory* (1939), *Badjao* (1957), *Perlas ng Silangan* (*Pearl of the Orient*, 1969), *Muslim Magnum .357* (1986), *Mistah: Mga Mandirigma* (*Mistah: Warriors,* 1994), *Bagong Buwan* (*New Moon*, 2001) and *Captive* (2012). Angeles uses historical analysis in arguing that the representations of the Filipino Muslims is heavily influenced by prevailing government policies and perceptions toward the relations between Muslims and Christians. Angeles traces this negative portrayal as a consequence of the resistance of the Muslims against the Spaniards and the Americans who colonized the Philippines which ripples further through the decades fueled by the armed separatist movement of the Muslims due to constant neglect, discrimination and othering committed by the State. By situating every film within a historical and political

period, Angeles is able to draw the correlation of the negative portrayal and the temper of Philippine politics.

In another study by Angeles on the representations of Filipino Muslims in American and Philippine media, Angeles claims that "abstract colonial constructions of the Muslim image have affected Muslim–Christian relations in the Philippines for centuries" (29). The term "Moro" is a Spanish legacy which was derogatory, a demonization resulting from the Moro resistance to Spanish rule and religion. When the United States took over the Philippines from Spain in 1898, the Muslims were viewed "as a problem inherited from Spain" ("Philippine Muslims on Screen" 4). The negative image was to continue in the reports of American administrators and the Moro portrayals in cartoons in American print media. These negative portrayals and religious bifurcation for the two groups—Muslims and Christians—have been divisive and built biases towards the Filipino Muslims. Mahmood in *Religious Difference in a Secular Age* (2016) similarly observes this tendency arising as a negative effect of secularization by the state which, instead of unifying, creates a polarization among major and minor cultures. In another essay "Religious Freedom, Minority Rights, and Geopolitics," Mahmood argues that "with the birth of the modern state…*majority* and *minority* came to serve as constitutional devices for managing differences that the ideology of nationalism sought to eradicate, eliminate, or assimilate" (143). The previously negative connotation of the word Moro only changed recently "to symbolize instead their determination to chart their destiny as a nation and their rich political and cultural heritage…in both print and electronic media" (Angeles 29-30).

Nested within the larger Muslim-Christian discrimination against each other is the hierarchy at work among Muslim tribes themselves. A study by Aileen Toohey explores how ethnic difference between two Muslim tribes in Southern Philippines, the Badjaos and the Tausugs, is presented in the film *Badjao* (1957) by filmmaker Lamberto Avellana. The story centers on Hassan, son of a Badjao leader, who falls in love with Bala Amai, niece of a Tausug datu. In his pursuit to marry Bala Amai, Hassan decides to become a Tausug and later realizes how impossible his move is. Toohey observes how the film uses Philippine theatrical traditions such as the moro-moro, a popular form of Spanish vernacular theater, in depicting ethnic difference, and melodramatic conventions to deepen characterization and emotionally engage the audience. The pangalay, the signature dance of the Sulu archipelago, is also used together with music and costume to further highlight ethnic difference between the tribes. Toohey argues that the film can be read as a representation of the Badjao subsumed within the superiority of the Tausug, or, by large, the Moros, and more largely the mainstream society. In the film, this power struggle is depicted in how the Badjaos challenge social order by bringing their grievances caused by the Tausugs and for the Tausugs to recognize the right of the Badjaos over the sea. Toohey employs various perspectives from politics, anthropology, literary and cultural criticism, visual composition and semiotics to reveal the ethnic differences in the film and illustrate the marginalization and discrimination toward the Moros.

When *Bagong Buwan* by Manila filmmaker Marilou Diaz-Abaya came out in 2001, it made rounds in film festivals, became a box office hit, and spurred conversations

on the Mindanao problem: "the Moro dissent from and rebellion against the central government" (394). Gladys Nubla writes that framing minority claims on the nation is suggestive of the perspective "of the majority of Filipino Christians in Manila." This is consistent with Moro writer and filmmaker, Teng Mangansakan's claim that the Moro people have been depicted negatively in cinema and media. While *Bagong Buwan* shows sympathy for the plight of the Moro people, it is geared towards an audience that is the "Christian, middle-class, Tagalog-speaking…an attempt to suture Muslims into the (already imagined whole) Philippine nation" (394). In short, it has not escaped the controlling gaze of the majority culture and the narrative that is salable to moviegoers.[34] The film downplays the Moro people's claim and right to self-determination through "its controlling pro-peace discourse" (395). Because it is pro-state in its effort to please the majority audience, it marginalizes the Moro people even as it claims to sympathize—motivated by the desire to fold and integrate them into a homogenizing nation, symptomatic of the national unconscious that characterize filmmakers who are outside the culture that their films represent, including Brillante Mendoza who is a non-Muslim

[34] In 2016, a photo of a thirteen year-old Badjao girl, Rita Gaviola, from Zamboanga was trending in social media. While the netizens praised her for her beauty, Carlos Conde of *Human Rights Watch* reminds that Gaviola is one of the many displaced and impoverished residents in Zamboanga due to an armed conflict between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front in 2013. Gaviola later on joined a reality tv show and became an artist. Viewers of a major television network that aired *Sahaya* (2019), a romantic series about a Badjao girl wanted Rita Gaviola to play the lead role claiming that for the Badjao "to be totally represented and empowered, it is better to make her the main [character]." They believe that Gaviola has the right experience and understanding of the tribe. However, Suzette Doctolero, head writer of the tv station tweeted that Gaviola is not yet ready for the lead role. Instead a minor role was given to her. Doctolero explains that performance is an art, an artist's job so the role need not have to be played by an indigenous actor. Doctolero further explains that if ethnicity were to become a factor in casting, many actors will not be able to play at all. While she expressed that it would be great to have indigenous artists, any artist needs only the sensibility to understand the role which is enough qualification. For her, it would be crazy if all artists are indigenous and since *Sahaya* is not an independent film, it did not require the degree of authenticity and realism often demanded and featured in independent films. She emphasizes that *Sahaya* is a soap opera which needs to be sold and Gaviola simply did not have the experience and star power to pull it through (Cepeda). This dismissive comment expressed by Doctolero is dangerous on many counts since it has failed to acknowledge the commodification, glamorizing, and erasure that *Sahaya* can do in relation to the plight of the Badjao and lumps all indigenous communities and their situation as unitary: not all indigenous communities have the same degree of marginalization, definitely not as abject as the Badjao situation.

and a non-Badjao filmmaker based in Manila who is better known internationally for his award-winning films that capture with extremely realist treatment the sordid realities in Philippine society: from the displacement of indigenous peoples,[35] to murder, prostitution, poverty,[36] drugs,[37] natural calamities,[38] and terrorism[39]—subjects that make for an exotic appeal to the international audience.

In an intercultural communication study by Paz Diaz, eight Filipino films with Filipino Muslim characters were viewed by two separate set of viewers, Christians and Muslims, to determine the presence or absence of prejudice and pride that crystallize in the consciousness of the reviewers in their perception of Filipino Muslims. The films include *Zamboanga*, *Badjao*, *Perlas ng Silangan*, *Muslim Magnum .357*, *Mistah: Mga Mandirigma*, *The Sarah Balabagan Story*, *Bagong Buwan*, and *Operation Balikatan*. The two groups differ in the social issues that they observe as prominent in the films which suggests that non-Muslim viewers were geared to observe religious and women's issues which is consistent to the claim of the study of Angeles. The Muslim reviewers "found that the films they viewed depicted… home, religion, economics, social conventions, recreation, and men's lives…" (8). Together these studies point out how Islam has been made a sloppy framework in analyzing themes and characters in films that involve Muslim indigenous peoples. That Islam complicates their lives is reductive and fails to

---

[35] See *Manoro* (2006) and *Mindanao* (2019)

[36] See *Kinatay* (2009), *Tirador* (2007), *Masahista* (2005), *Service* (2008), *Lola* (2009)

[37] See *Ma'Rosa* (2016), *Alpha: The Right to Kill* (2018)

[38] See *Taklub* (2015)

[39] See *Captive* (2012)

factor in the role of the state in minoritizing and discriminating Muslim Filipinos and the role of media in maintaining the skewed optics.

In *Thy Womb*, a closer examination of the film's religious dimension will reveal that while Shaleha's banishment from her marriage with Bangas-An is a decision that Shaleha willfully agrees to, their divorce is unIslamic when viewed under the Shariah law and Philippine law. Jamal Ahmad Nasir, a highly-respected scholar on Islamic law in relation to women, maintains that a Muslim man can take up as many as four wives in two conditions: first, he must be equally just to all of them and second, he should be able to provide for their needs. However, Islamic regulation reminds men who wish to have more than one wife that "if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly [with them], then only one . . . That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice" (25). This is based on the practical view that it is impossible for a man to enact perfect justice among his wives. Bangas-An obviously fails to adhere to this law the moment he privileges Mersila over Shaleha, implying that the tradition of the dower is a social mechanism of the Badjao as a culture rather than of Islam as a religion. Pertaining to the dower as part of the process of betrothal, Ahmad Nasir further explains that

> although [both parties] agree with such conditions, the Shariah does not allow any marriage that is conditional upon a non-existent condition or a non-existent occurrence, something that may happen in the future, or a state or condition of either party that does not already exist…it is wrong to include a condition in a marriage contract which can be proven to be invalid under the Shariah…An

> example of such an invalid condition would be for the woman to stipulate that the man divorces a previous wife. (63-64)

The dower is a mere agreed upon amount of money or material property that the man gives to his wife. Mersila, demanding that Shaleha must leave Bangas-An the moment she gives birth to his child as a part of her dower, is complicit to the violation of the Shariah because the condition is presently inexistent. For the Zahiris,[40] divorce based on a physical or mental defect in either party is not allowed. Nasir quotes the celebrated Islamic law scholar, al-Zahiri that "No marriage shall be nullified once it is duly celebrated, by any leprosy, insanity, nor any other defect on the part of the wife, nor by impotence nor by a vaginal defect, nor by any defect whatsoever" (142). Shaleha's divorce from Bangas-An on the basis of her incapacity to provide a child violates this rule but Shaleha's autonomous desire exceeds the boundaries of these laws, exactly because Islam as an analytical framework falls short in understanding the complexity of her subjectivity. Masami Mori, in her study of Muslim gender practices in the Philippines notes that while polygamy is not allowed under Philippine law, a Filipino Muslim man, under the Muslim Personal Code of the Philippines, Article 27, is allowed to take more than one wife but is required to deal with his wives "with equal companionship and just treatment as enjoyed by Islamic law and only in exceptional cases" (142). Mori cites

---

[40] Zahiri: "School of Islamic law founded by Abu Sulayman Daud al-Zahiri in the ninth century. Flourished in Spain, particularly under the leadership of the jurist Ibn Hazm . Extinct by the fourteenth century, although it is recognized by four extant Sunni schools. Declared the *Quran*, hadith, and consensus of Companions as the only acceptable sources of authority. Rejected the practice of taqlid (imitation of precedent). Based its legal principles on a literal (zahir) interpretation of *Quran* and hadith, rejecting analogy (qiyas) and juristic preference (istihsan). Emphasized the importance of applying the rules of grammar to the text in order to determine the revealed meaning. Objected to the use of reason in favor of revelation." (Oxford Islamic Studies Online)

Buat, a Muslim legal specialist in the Philippines, pertaining to exceptional cases when a man is allowed to take a second wife: physical or psychological incapacity, if a wife fails to perform her marital obligations, if the wife cannot bear a child, or when the wife without justifiable causes refuses to live in the conjugal home. Taking a second wife is considered a lesser evil than keeping a mistress; considered equally immoral or adulterous under Muslim and Christian law (142). The law, however, does not provide that a Muslim woman's incapacity to bear a child is considered ground for a husband to divorce her. Thus, Shaleha's separation from Bangas-An is an issue of Islamicity only because it violates the Shariah as a law that enshrines her well-being but not as a causation of her oppression. In a scene where Shaleha is praying with her beads, her sister approaches her and tells her that Mersila's family has opened for talks of marriage. Shaleha praises Allah seven times for the news. In the frame, the praying Shaleha is backgrounded to a withered cactus inside her house in an alternating rack focus to signify both agony and elation, and most importantly, the dynamic of her agency with oppression (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Rack focus: Oppression, freedom; *Thy Womb* (2012) by Brillante Mendoza

Reading Shaleha as a social body enables the discourse of the Badjao as a minority persisting against the mode of exclusion from the Philippine nation-state. Shaleha does not bear a child but, as a midwife, has brought many children into the world and edifies the social structures necessary for the perpetuity of the Badjaos as a subaltern community: as a healer, a weaver, a fisher, a vendor, an elder, a conduit of social ceremonies. When gunshots are heard during a wedding celebration, Shaleha as an elder makes sure the ceremony pushes through by appeasing the fear of the village people. In the final sequence of the film, Shaleha attends to Mersila giving birth to the son of Bangas-An. Shaleha takes the child in her arms, and momentarily, in an intimate gesture of fondness, cradles the child like he is her own. Bangas-An reproaches Shaleha and she bequeaths the child to Mersila and asks permission from the couple to give her the umbilical cord for her keeping. Shaleha cuts the umbilical cord and wraps it with a white cloth. Allah has blessed Bangas-An's household with a child. The sequence is sealed by an image of birds in flight over the water (Figure 11). Shaleha's sacrifice in the end is the ultimate achievement of her body as the most powerful life-giving force, not as an essence emanating from her womb where futurity is literalized as dependent on the woman's body, but as an agency adeptly performed on and around her desire as a free subject. Shaleha, keeping a child's umbilical cord every after birth giving, reclaims her power as a gatekeeper of life that ushers a generation of Badjao children who will further the vitality of their tribe—a vitality that can only be sustained if the Badjao can exercise littoral sovereignty and fluidly navigate the post-national waters of the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei.

Figure 11. Birds in flight; *Thy Womb* (2012) by Brillante Mendoza

In *Thy Womb*, Bangas-An and Shaleha get caught in a gunfight between two fishing boats, suggesting two tribes having a dispute over the fishing territories. Bangas-An is wounded and their catch is sequestered by gunmen. This situation pushes the Badjao inland, far from the sea which gives their bodies a mobility crucial to their survival; they become beggars and nomads who, despite being assimilated in space are unassimilated in time due to a unique biorhythm and worldview not compatible with the mainstream rhythm of urban life. For a long time, the Badjaos have been "following the flow of the fish, tides, and seasons," crisscrossing their ancestral domains that is the Sulu

Sea and and the waters surrounding the Sulawesi Island of Indonesia (Lagsa). They have been sailing through international waters even before the modern nation-states of Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines were born. Sometimes called the Godforsaken Ones, they survive one of the most dangerous waters in the world due to high policing and piracy. In times of encounters, the peace-loving Badjaos do not pick up weapons but flee to avoid danger ("Last Nomads of the Sea…").

The fluid mobility of the Badjao complicates international borders. In Malaysia, they were charged as illegal immigrants, jailed, and then deported to the Philippines. In the Philippines, the deported were met without government programs that cater to their needs. They are "among the most obscure, misunderstood and marginalized among the Filipino ethnic-linguistic groups." After floating in the seas of Southeast Asia for centuries, the Badjao started moving inland where their unique skills in the water slowly become irrelevant and forgotten. With no official state and official nationality, unaccorded with equal rights, the Badjao had for a time "no schooling, healthcare, access to government-provided social services" (Valle, Gibbens, Bracamonte et al 2). Nomadism meant that the group did not possess mainstream education. Those who moved inland lived in squalid environments while those who remained in the seas are unbounded by restrictions and regulations of the state. For instance, when the war broke out in Zamboanga in September 9, 2013, many of the Badjaos were displaced from their sea-dwelling and pleaded with the government not to uproot them. Even the Department of Social Welfare and Development wanted to move them to the mountain claiming that the Badjaos were consulted regarding the relocation. But the Badjaos did not want to move

insisting that if they are placed in the sea, they will survive (Alipala, "Badjao being moved out…"). Some of the Badjaos who fled from terror attacks and relocated at the littoral zones of Cawa-cawa islands in Zamboanga were demolished for the second time. While they obliged peacefully, the city mayor ignored their demand for explanation, pointing out that their situation is better in relocation sites where there is water, electricity, and food. (Alipala, "Tribe relying on sea…"). Scattered, the Badjaos who reached Iloilo reportedly begged by using solicitation letters even though they are illiterate. Sologastoa writes that a syndicate might be handling them. The Badjaos were rounded up by the city government and were shipped back to Mindanao. Mayor Jose Espina expressed his disgust over the Badjaos who defecate everywhere and questioned how they can be begging and owning cellphones at the same time ("Who's behind the proliferation of Badjao beggars?"). Nursida Salud herself a Badjao and part of DSWD is alarmed of more Badjaos having "no sense of direction" (Ermitanio).

There are two clashing perspectives on the state belonging of the Badjao: one looks at the Badjao as stateless while the other views them as a multi-state group (Lagsa). Both perspectives reveal the inadequacies of political boundaries as the problem is obviously extra-political and extra-national. It is a breach to the nation-form that is narrowly terrestrial despite the provisions of economic zones beyond the littoral margins. The birth of the modern nation-states demarcated the waters, modernity has re-arranged the lives of the Badjao by re-arranging their dwelling. Anthropologist Albert Alejo calls for conversations that go beyond the religious and political and make way for the traditional: "let's follow the flow of the people, trade, or the metaphors and explore

richness and highways between and among these countries and let's start with cultural connectivity" (Lagsa). The Badjao indigeneity resists nationality. The Badjaos' constant movement confuses national imaginaries in a sense that the ocean is transnational, encompassed by political and economic rights of nations but blind to the cultural currents of peoples living on water. Shaleha as a social body negates the woman-as-nation trope but critiques nation-ness through woman-as-subaltern and woman-as-water tropes. Shaleha's act of self-liberation stands for Badjao independence and sovereignty even as she lives and skirts around the national structural violence of patriarchy, poverty, racism, and environmental injustice through self-abjection which is the ultimate enactment of sovereignty and the most extreme form of agency. Shaleha as a social conduit functions as the umbilical cord that links sustenance from the source of life within the primordial home-sea, the womb, to nourish the development of the Badjao as the metaphorical human embryo (Figure 12). Without Shaleha as the umbilical cord that keeps life flowing in the diegetic sea-space of Simunul to preserve the integrity of her tribe, the Badjao community in *Thy Womb* will persist but in constant threat for an exodus to the hostile terrestriality of the mainland.

Thy Womb uses Shaleha's banishment to criticize the family unit as the nucleus of the nation-state. The nation-state as a space of exclusion is defined by remainder populations which the nation-state constantly pushes into the fringes. The Badjao look at the sea as borderless and live a nomadic life which is in conflict with the Philippine mainstream society's definition of territoriality and privacy. The policies of the state exclude them through its modernist approach that homogenizes indigeneity,

Figure 12. Fertility sequence of ocean-as-womb: human-and-oceanic perspective, whales mating, tortoise laying eggs; *Thy Womb* (2012) by Brillante Mendoza

a framework developed with indigenous peoples who inhabit land instead of water (Macalandag 1-2).[41] This grammar of exclusion is consistent with the exclusion of Shaleha from the family that she has formed in Bangas-An, Mersila, and their son. However, Shaleha as a social body goes beyond the figure of a locked-out subaltern but emerges as a stand-in for the necessary conditions such as sovereignty over the water-dwelling, fluidity of movement in the sea, vitality of socio-cultural practices, and the unique territoriality that allow the Badjao community to remain in a state of wholeness. The completion of a Badjao family in the film, accomplished by Shaleha, is a reinscription of the core structure of the prediasporic Badjao in the brink of fission, a statement that a strong sense of communal structure—not only through biological reproduction—that is allowed to flow in its own temporality ensures that the Badjao will survive in the future.

Forwarding the concept of littoral sovereignty of the Badjao serves as a synthesis of the discourse on land-based indigeneity and oceanic studies due to its being strategically located both in the geopolitical and liminal zones. The littoral zone by being part land and part ocean is a fluidly narrow margin and overlap of both spaces, an optics that is easier to miss including the racial dimension of the littoral space. To inscribe the littoral sovereignty of the Badjao is to racialize the waters, acknowledge human settlements that rupture the nation-state's self definition, correct the invisibility of water-based indigeneity by re-framing dwelling as not only land-based and calling out the

[41] As the government declares the waters where they dwell as marine sanctuary, the Badjaos are displaced in their quest for livelihood (29), removing them from the sea that is central to their understanding of the cosmos. The sedentarization policies of the State which relocates the Badjao from the sea to land is taking them away from the lifeways that the Badjao know (Navarro ii, 61, 66).

historical erasure perpetuated by the national narrative. The Badjao have a deep temporal relationship with the sea as evidenced through the mutation in their bodies. Capable of walking at the bottom of the ocean, the Badjao diver can stay underwater for thirteen minutes due to a larger spleen that is caused by a DNA mutation, conditioned by being in the underwater environment for thousands of years (Valle, Gibbens). The Badjao are conduits of relational knowledge between human and sea, inscribed in a body that has adapted with water over time. However, no literature has cautioned against turning them into subjects of scientific and anthropological inquiry nor present them as bearers of knowledge. Though anchored on ocean, the Badjao do not have legal claim on their ancestral domains. This can be partly explained by the complexity of sacralization of water: "unlike terrestrial space—where one might memorialize a space into place—the perpetual circulation of the ocean currents means that the sea dissolves phenomenological experience and diffracts the accumulation of narrative" (DeLoughrey 33). It is almost impossible to ascertain "the ritualized placement of bodies, bones, and stone monuments" which are the basic material archive (35). With an uncommon native religion that is a mixture of Islam and animism, the Badjao worship "both a God and the spirits and deceased ancestors that live in the currents and tides, in the corals and the mangroves." The value of remaining in their water dwelling is not only to sustain livelihood but to protect the waters of their ancestral spirits. ("Last Nomads of the Sea…")

The ocean as a site of discourse and an epistemology has arrived as a discipline popularly known as blue humanities. Elizabeth DeLoughrey and Tatiana Flores claim that blue humanities or the oceanic turn is a response to the crisis caused by the Anthropocene

that is “interwoven with narratives of extinction, apocalypse, alterity, and precarity.” They call for an ethical engagement in which humans submerge or descend from human exceptionalism (134). Brugidou and Fabien in their exploration of oceanic perspectives write that “oceanic sensitive-anthropology can provide precious sense-ideas in order to think, feel, and imagine the contemporary ecological crisis” (359). The ocean as a temporality that is yet to be understood has not been fully/truly historicized and racialized. Though this does not mean it cannot be potentially colonized in the future as it is already being colonized in the present. The 1956 Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS I) pronounced the shift from the “geomorphological ocean to the resource ocean, an ocean that calls upon the human species for its colonization, domestication—in other words, for its entry into history as useful space” (363-364). This was further complicated by the spatial turn in post 1970s that re-emphasized the Exclusive Economic Zone, the two hundred nautical miles as an extension of national spaces. “Geographers, historians, and cultural studies scholars configure the ocean as a historical space of transitional capital, empire, and slavery—often on an unmarked masculinity that we might term *aqua homo*” (DeLoughrey 32-33). The assumption here is paradoxical: historicizing the ocean presupposes its neutrality, that is, the ocean is unracialized and therefore, *aqua nullius* as such, can be treated as a standing reserve. But this new historicization is an erasure of history for the ocean has for long been a site of power relations (Brugidou and Fabien 364). Human communities such as the Badjao have existed for centuries in oceans. The difference between two histories is the industrial mechanics of the second, meaning the new human relationship with the ocean is

extractive and unsustainable. The theorization of the ocean has always been done by landers (371). Thus, to imagine a littoral sovereignty is to upset a land-based epistemology and get past the ocean's temporality that is still vaulted in the future; not only to historicize it but recognize oceans as anthropological domains—not as standing reserves to exploit and map in the Anthropogenic sense but as a cosmos that has co-existed with its indigenous water-dwellers which therefore must be approached with respect to human and non-human interrelationships and sensibilities. By "thinking and feeling with the ocean," we get past the negative connotation of the Anthropocene by surrendering "one's dominant position, and any earthshaping prerogative vanishes in the swell. One feels the mutual metamorphoses, the back and forth between Twin and Anti-Twin, between lander and oceaner, the whole politics of 'shaping', in which every living form participates within a locality" (371-372). While it is not wrong to explore the theoretical depths of the ocean, it is problematic for theory to gloss over the racial dimension such as the littoral dwelling of the Badjao that links the terrestrial and the oceanic.

Thy Womb as a title is a giveaway of the gendered metaphor of the human body as the ocean. The womb being interpellated is the sea, the mother of the Badjao, embodied by Shaleha, the conduit which makes littoral sovereignty possible. Shaleha's barrenness instead of a commentary on her body thus speaks of the deteriorating conditions that make possible for the Badjao to exercise their sovereignty over their water domains. Shaleha defies her bodily condition and extricates herself from the family which is the basic institutional unit of the nation-state. Futurity then is no longer inscribed in biology

but in the integrity of cultural, spiritual, and physical environs. By reading the ocean as mother, it counters the heteropatriarchy of the Anthropocene and the nation-state, which for long has attempted to shape it, including the communities that thrive in its waters. Water both as body and milieu serves as crux of the interrelatedness of the Badjao with water. Reading Shaleha as both social body and the ocean as womb, both interpellated, taps into the idea of embodiment not only as metaphor but also as metonymy. Astrida Neimanis theorizes the body through water which she claims to challenge anthropocentrism (2). She explains that since embodiment is watery, and that we belong to a watery relations within the hydrocommons, the idea of embodiment as primarily human no longer applies. "Water extends embodiment in time—body, to body, to body. Water in this sense is facilitative and directed towards the becoming of other bodies… never really autonomous" (3). Embracing this watery embodiment thus connects us with problems in the ecology. Neimanis offers the concept of posthuman gestationality which is

> the facilitative logic of our bodily water for gestating new lives and new forms of life, never fully knowable — is, again, fundamental to these logics. This gestationality challenges the primacy of human heteronormative reprosexuality as the cornerstone of proliferating life, yet without washing away a feminist commitment to thinking the difference of maternal, feminine, and otherwise gendered and sexed bodies…where past and future bodies swim through our own. 4

Watery embodiment re-members the human with Nature, ascribing a wholeness which is basically the core energy or structure of the need for the reinstatement of ancestral water domains of the Badjao. The ecofeminist turn here is unmistakeable: phallogocentrism, government, nation-state, sovereignty, are all destabilized and engulfed by the margin that is boundless and centerless, the polymorphous network of water.

CHAPTER V

TRANSCENDING NATION: INTERROGATING THE POWER DIFFERENTIAL OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

In chapter four, I identify the littoral zone as a site of indigenous sovereignty where the Badjao are most in tune with their life ways and cosmos. In chapter five, I look at the littoral zone as a field of trauma for subalterns that survive climate catastrophe. Inland, the Badjaos become developmental refugees for being severed from the sea. Ashore, climate subalterns become developmental refugees because the Anthropocene has transformed the littoral zone into a place of compounded vulnerability to climate catastrophe and sea level rise. Chapter four anchors on fluidity which is an internal auto-critique while chapter five opens to an external auto-critique of the postcolonial nation. To build my case, I introduce the idea of transcendence as a necessary ethos of nations in responding to the global catastrophe that is the climate change and the disruption of the Anthropocene to the narrative of the nation, probe into classical—and its derivative in postcolonial—trauma studies to underscore the extreme vulnerability and liquidation of lives and ecosystems that colonized nations and postcolonial subjects face in the Anthropocene, and argue that climate trauma produces new subjects that are post-national and post-postcolonial, that is, climate catastrophe establishes the scalar trauma as the new point of reference of subjectivity instead of nationality. Climate trauma has the power to re-world the postcolonial nation-space and create new coordinates that map the trauma field.

This chapter theorizes through *Storm Children* (2014), an observational documentary by Lav Diaz that was released almost a year after typhoon Haiyan hit Tacloban, Philippines in 2013. With sequences shot few months apart, the 143-minute documentary shows the dismal ground situation of the people ravaged by storm with an undertow of accusation on the Philippine government for its glaring neglect. *Storm Children* joins Diaz's growing body of ecocinema, namely, *Death in the Land of the Encantos* (2007), *The Day Before the End* (2016), *The Halt* (2019), *Genus, Pan* (2020), and the much anticipated internationally funded *When the Waves are Gone* (202?). Through *Storm Children,* I describe how new coordinates of the trauma field are established and consequently, through radical aesthetics that is the long take and single camera technique, how the film constructs the cinematic experience as an installation where the spectator, privileged yet conflicted, is captured and co-textualized. Conversely, *Storm Children's* radical aesthetics does not only visualize climate subalterns as newly emerged subjects but also places the spectator's body and consciousness in an ethical and critical encounter with alterity.

The Crisis of Planetary Sustainability

Not surprisingly, the problems of the Anthropocene have become the potent stimuli in the task of reanimating the nation-form to transcend. The destruction caused by the Anthropocene calls for a re-formulation of how sovereignties must come together to protect the global community. In *The Crisis of Global Modernity*, Prasenjit Duara emphasizes that there is a looming crisis of planetary sustainability (2). To be able to align and respond to climate crisis, nations must transcend since

> …a cosmopolitan world is now more necessary than ever before in history because the nation and the world are grossly mismatched. If the 'nation form' itself is a global design for competitiveness and nations have from the start been competitive engines to acquire global resources, globalization today has reached a point where no nation in the world is solely responsible for its wealth or poverty. (18-19)

The present era has respatialized cores and peripheries in ways beyond geography. Within and among nation-states are different groupings and divisions that do not neatly follow the world-system configuration (13). The sovereignty of the nation-state-as-form is in crisis as it has remained a conduit of global capitalism but has quite proven itself to be destructive to the environment on a global scale (19), a scale which makes narrow and reveals the problem of the nationalist model which "subordinates or devalues the links between individuals and other expressions of community at scales below and above the nation" (28). Instead, by transcending and linking sovereignties that are built from the ground up, nations can have a better chance at mitigating the looming disasters of the Anthropocene. Vilashini Coopan writes of the monolithic nation's closure that must open to more possibilities within itself and in relation with other nations:

> More than entombing the nation, the present enjoins on us the task of reanimating it. This means learning to see nations in more places and in more ways, as less bounded by their borders and more inextricably connected to all that seems to lie outside them, as well as all that lies inside: the alien, the unheimlich (uncanny), the other within. xvi

What Coopan proposes goes beyond the idea of internationalism. It invites simultaneously an inward looking stance of nations to its internal differences to recalibrate how it must exercise its sovereignty in relation to populations that bear the brunt of its existence and the most dire effects of the Anthropocene. It must acknowledge that the crisis is happening in all fronts. Because of the massive destruction caused by the Anthropocene, the narrative foundation of the nation that is necessary for the formation of national identity and subjectivity is disrupted. As a result of the discontinuity of the narrative, new subjectivities also emerge which anchor their foundation on other points of reference, primarily temporal, veering away from modernity in its linearity and temporal re-worlding. Modernity, in itself a transition from one temporal hegemony to another, was an identity transport (Duara 59).[42] Thus the natives, the indigenous, the ilustrados, the mestizos became Filipinos when the Spaniards turned over the Philippines to the Americans in 1898, a teleological identity towards an entitlement of a collective that is protected by the sovereignty of the new nation. However, the Anthropocene has the power to de-transition from modernity's temporality and usher an emergence of new temporalities that will clarify to oneself the unviability of the nation-form. In this sense, subjects find more fluid and transcendent ways of apprehending themselves because, again, we

---

[42] According to Duara, though the premodern conception of time was non-linear, it was hegemonic. Polytemporality as a structure derived from the old temporal model though not essential in defining modernity is supplemental for modernity to exist (93). Duara goes on to explain that the non-west, fundamentally thought of as lagging behind already had basic features of modernity like capitalist processes (94). Modern nations can thus acknowledge and learn from transcendent and circulatory relations that were established before modernity.

> live in a world of multiple temporalities, scales and histories that shape our subjectivities though not necessarily how we identify ourselves. The necessity of recognizing the multiplicity of the sources of our subject hood is increasingly urgent because of the yawning mismatch between the nation as a sovereign unit and the global forces that shape the destinies of people in those nations. 90

What Duara calls as second modernity is no longer about development but in managing the risks caused and compounded by first modernity (91). Postcolonial nations though generally have not outmoded the urgency to edify its form face the crisis of maneuvering towards a more pressing need to sustain itself in the context of global catastrophe. Plagued with colonial legacies on the one hand and destroyed by the Anthropocene on the other, the nation-state must transcend and call out the uneven distribution of risks and vulnerabilities. In short, confront the power differential of the Anthropocene.

Power Differential of the Anthropocene

The Anthropocene must be examined from the perspectives of those who are most situated in harm's way, implicating its contribution to and its imbrication with imperialism and colonialism. An emerging body of humanistic scholarship on the Anthropocene calls for a more refined analyses that foreground power relations that cut across race, histories, geographies, and economies. According to Elizabeth DeLoughrey in *Allegories of the Anthropocene* (2019),

> the lack of engagement with postcolonial and Indigenous perspectives has shaped Anthropocene discourse to claim the novelty of crisis rather than

> being attentive to the historical continuity of dispossession and disaster caused by empire. In this sense Anthropocene scholarship produces a globalization discourse that misses the globe. Thus its cultural geographies and methods are still insufficient to address a complex crisis of planetary scale. 2

An important problematic central to this imbalance of scholarship is the universalizing concept of the human as its main actor. Dipesh Chakrabarty, looking into the dynamic of postcolonial thinking and the Anthropocene, proposes that human agency must be thought of in "multiple and incommensurable scales" in order to accommodate the nuances that emerge at the crux of globalization and global warming (1). While our understanding of global warming as an environmental crisis caused by the inequities of capitalism is becoming clearer and that this crisis threatens the entire humanity, it is not sufficiently pronounced how human agency behind the Anthropocene is an issue of power differential. Chakrabarty outlines that there are at least three images of the human within this wholesale global crisis: the Universalist-Enlightenment which highlights *sameness* of the human as a subject with rights that must be exercised, regardless of geographical and cultural specificities; the Postcolonial-Postmodern which acknowledges not only sameness but also "anthropological difference," that is, "class, sexuality, gender, history," etc.; and the Human in the Anthropocene as a geological force (1-2). While the first perspective has been made passe by the second, it has not completely lost the shadow of its logic on the third perspective: scientists have always referred to the human in the Anthropocene as a singular (therefore universal) species "whose commitment to

fossil-fuel based, energy-consuming civilization is now a threat to that civilization itself" (2). It remains blind to the human agency behind the geological force at issue because of the global magnitude of its threat. The third perspective stops at the claim that climate change is human-induced. The second perspective corrects this myopia and re-configures the human in the Anthropocene not as a *singular*-plural "we" but as a *plural*-plural "we" wherein power differential is interrogated according to who enacts the Anthropocene, who benefits from its enactment, how this enactment manufactures uneven degrees of vulnerability—revealing human agency as inseparable from the discourse of capital and race. Conversely, of difference.

Race is at the forefront of power geometries that produced the Anthropocene. According to Laura Pulido, discourse that comes from the Global North frames the Anthropocene as a globally enacted problem created by all and yet this move belies the "fact that only a relatively small percentage of the global population is actually responsible for and has benefited from the conditions that produced it" (116). While the highlight of disparities is correct, the typical emphasis on the gap through vocabularies such as "rich and poor," "developed and developing countries," is inadequate since the "geography of wealth and power" are definitely racial (ibid). Looking at the Anthropocene through the lens of the economic system, Jason Moore suggests that it should instead be called Capitalocene. Even though leftists do not leave out colonialism, racism, and gender in talking about degrees of vulnerability, racism has often been subordinated by capitalism. Pulido therefore argues that the racial process, without dismissing other interrelated processes, must be at the core in examining the

Anthropocene "in both producing it and in determining who lives and dies" (117). In examining the uneven geography of death, "the rich, industrialized countries, which are disproportionately white, will escape with vastly fewer deaths" (118). Indigenous communities are most vulnerable to the Anthropocene through suffering "species loss and change, flooding, and drought." According to Kyle Powys White, global warming is merely a continuation of the long apocalypse experienced by indigenous people from destruction of ecosystems and communities through colonization (cited in Pulido 119-120). Colonialism was the megamachine that paved for Anthropocene's destructive powers. Pulido underlines indifference as central to the Global North's attitudes, practices, and policies towards the Other—indifference which reproduces inequality within races, translates to the determination of who lives or who dies, and maintains uneven racial vulnerabilities in which white lives are valued over those that are not (121).

To trace the racial process of the Anthropocene, Pulido picks out 1610[43] instead of 1964—two possible dates offered by Lewis and Maslin in their article "Defining the Anthropocene"—because it marks an intense period of "colonization, conquest, and primitive accumulation" of the Americas that made two profound historical changes such as territorial expansion to other continents and the fall of carbon emissions (124). Despite foregrounding racism, Pulido does not detach it from capitalism but acknowledges it as its co-constituent force. Their imbrication, in what Lisa Lowe terms as racial capitalism, "refutes the idea of a 'pure' capitalism external to or extrinsic from, the

[43] "The Anthropocene has many disputed beginnings: some date its emergence to the rise of sedentary agricultural communities roughly 12,000 years ago, others to 1610 and the colonization of the Americas, others still to the onset of Europe's industrial revolution circa 1800 or to the Trinity nuclear test of 1945" (Nixon 2).

racial formation of collectivities and populations" (126). The activity of primitive accumulation therefore was not only an era of capitalist production but also a racial mechanics from which a racial map can be constructed to trace the large-scale imbalance of wealth and power that festers in the present time. Primitive accumulation hardly goes away and its character is not confined in the Global South because it is also happening in the Global North.

Globalization has created deprivations of the human condition. Chakrabarty, drawing from Bhabha's thinking, highlights the downside of the cosmopolitan dream as can be seen in the lives of the new subaltern such as "the stateless," "migrant workers, minorities, asylum seekers, [and] refugees"(5). For to Bhabha, these mobilities and enfolding to the civic body are not always positive cases of global citizenship wherein one can break free from national sovereignties and their limits because individuals and populations cannot simply flow freely within this "flowing, borderless, global world" but "need to settle, claim asylum or nationality, demand housing and education, assert their economic and cultural rights, and seek the status of citizenship" (6). This critique to diaspora is inextricably a critique to the nation-state in the sense that it is supposedly an instrument whose powers and resources are allocated and distributed to its subjects as an enactment of social justice. The nation-state manufactures subalterns within and subalternizes populations originating from *without* as a consequence of movements within the world's globalizing structure. The organization of peoples into nation-states to Hanna Arendt produces statelessness as a consequence of 'savage' conditions experienced by many human beings. Developments that took place in the postcolony

were uneven due to capitalist exploitation, displacing peoples even when they remain emplaced. Development being perpetually incomplete intrinsically carries its own abandonment. Its byproduct is the developmental refugee. Consequently, state-failures also produce new subalterns not only within but also without in the form of refugees, asylum seekers, and illegal migrants (7). This is how the figure of the human within the globalizing context is "constitutionally and necessarily doubled and contradictory" (8)—accorded with universal rights on the one hand but subjected to oppressions on the other. Chakrabarty points out that the challenge brought about by global warming goes beyond the critique of human rights nor contemplation on the subject. The ill effects of the Anthropocene are worsened by already existing global inequities which calls for a critique of "the self-aggrandizing tendencies of powerful and rich nations and speak of a progressive politics of differentiated responsibilities in handling debates about migration, legal or illegal" (9). The "we" in the collective human agency in the Anthropocene must be interrogated to refine the pronouncement of climate scientists that places the human as the core of the climate change narrative (10) and break the matter down to a clear assignment of roles—according to who are the culprit, the victim, the vulnerable. Taking from the suggestion of Jennifer Jacquet, postcolonial scholar Rob Nixon asks the same question regarding human agency, "that while some humans are leaving Anthropocene footprints that are indubitably geological, other humans are not geological actors at all?" (8). Nixon acknowledges that while a call to action against threat to life is urgent and an important responsibility, this must not be a totalizing act that fails to examine "the radically unequal history of human impacts and hence of human responsibilities.

Imaginative perspectives have political implications. An epic Anthropocene vantage point risks concealing— historically and in the present—unequal human impacts, unequal human agency, and unequal human vulnerabilities" (ibid). Nixon poses the challenge of telling the Anthropocene narrative in its duality, that is, the shared narrative of being a geologic force and threat and the ever-widening gap of resources among humans. Conflating all into "we" conceals the histories that shape power struggles (9). Borrowing from Andreas Malm, Nixon points out that geologizing, similar to dehistoricizing and universalizing, is a strategy of legitimizing ideology—in this case the wholesale burden to the undifferentiated human actor (11). How come that the problem created by few, its process benefiting only the few, has now become a problem that must be solved by all? Climate change as a crisis which must be

> routed through all our "anthropological differences" can only mean that, however anthropogenic the current global warming may be in its origins, there is no corresponding "humanity" that in its oneness can act as a political agent. A place thus remains for struggles around questions on intrahuman justice regarding the uneven impacts of climate change. The need then is to think the human on multiple scales and registers and as having both ontological and nonontological modes of existence. This is why the need arises to view the human simultaneously on contradictory registers: as a geophysical force and as a political agent, as a bearer of rights and as author of actions; subject to both the stochastic forces of nature (being itself one such force collectively) and open to the

> contingency of individual human experience; belonging at once to differently-scaled histories of the planet, of life and species, and of human societies. 14

The call for calibrating the share of burdens and responsibilities of main actors of the Anthropocene is insufficient in mitigating the magnitude of its destruction. While climate catastrophe is a threat to privileged collectives, it has already created a scalar trauma to populations situated in harm's way, populations who have been made vulnerable by colonialism and capitalism and would likely dwell in trauma fields created by the Anthropocene.

Classical, Postcolonial, and Climate Trauma in Media

Our apprehension of climate trauma is constructed by media. Vacillations of media easily disseminate or mediatize trauma across geographies, making it difficult to separate individual trauma from collective trauma. E. Ann Kaplan in *Trauma Culture* writes that trauma, whether direct or vicarious, produces new subjects (1). Paying attention to how media distributes trauma is important because of its subtle and manifold ways of affecting one's relationship with places and events and creating new subjectivities and identities. Kaplan and Wang formulate at least four viewing positions on how films mark the viewer with trauma. First, some films tackle the issue of trauma and introduce it to the audience with a sense of closure or cure in the end (9); second, films allow the viewer to experience trauma vicariously which could lead the audience to be more curious and spur them into action; third is through voyeurism which Kaplan and Wang label as dangerous because it is an exploitative position where the audience derives

pleasure in secret; and fourth, the position of 'witnessing' which is vital to transform trauma into a space of empathy through narrativization.

> This position of "witness" may open up a space for transformation of the viewer through empathic identification without vicarious traumatization—an identification which allows the spectator to enter into the victim's experience through a work's narration. It is the unusual, anti-narrative process of the narration that is itself transformative in inviting the viewer to at once be there emotionally (and often powerfully moved), but also to keep a cognitive distance and awareness denied to the victim by the traumatic process. The victim in the narration bears witness to the catastrophe, but the viewer becomes the point of communication that, as Dori Laub and Robert Lifton both argue, reasserts continuity and humanity. It is this triangular structure —i.e. the structure of the horror, the victim and the listener/viewer—that witnessing involves and which may promote inter-cultural compassion and understanding. 10

Kaplan and Wang explain that objecting trauma to be represented is not without legitimate reasons. With what they call "aestheticization of politics," modern states can make use of narratives and myths in forms that self-represent and in strategies that are fascist and authoritarian. Trauma, such as war, becomes a spectacle that is geared towards advancing an ideology (10). The other concern against representation is the commodification and exoticization of historical and cultural traumas, at times in obsessive manner. This aestheticization tendency according to Kaplan and Wang "flattens

difference, history, memory, and the body into an abstract, pleasing mold" and may serve as a form of short-circuiting closure, an arrival at a forced meaning (11).

Historical trauma must be understood within the context of modernity. Kaplan and Wang maintain a balanced view between the idea of unrepresentability of trauma as a way of respecting traumatized individuals and the representability that provides sensationalism and false closure. If trauma is locked out by not representing it on the one hand, it is also misguided to demand that representation should perfectly resemble the traumatic event on the other. What is crucial to keep in mind is to situate trauma within "a longer chain of the structural mutations in modern systems that have accumulated a record of violence, suffering, and misery" and acknowledge that trauma too is powerful in producing more narratives and images and not merely losing them (12). By understanding trauma within the arc of modernity, the audience sees how the mechanics of how social structures produce trauma which is necessary to acquire the will to act for change. A choice has to be made between a representation that is inadequate and a representation that is not there at all:

> As trauma consists in the unmaking of the world, the prohibition against representation blocks the way to the re-making of the world. While it shatters the culture's symbolic resources, trauma also points to the urgent necessity of reconfiguring and transforming the broken repertoire of meaning and expression. 12

To Kaplan and Wang, the socio-historical imagination has the power to (re)create a society where the individual can be placed back to a non traumatic dynamic with the

world, a projection into visuality and therefore into externality, and reverse the isolating space of pain that one inhabits due to a traumatic experience and possibly make it shareable (14-15). To one borne into modernity, one faces its shocks and traumas

> with its secular dethroning of the sacred and the absolute, its aggressive technology and military conflicts, its destructive ideological movements of fascism, totalitarianism, and other fundamentalisms, its expansive world markets, its imperialist conquest and colonization of indigenous peoples, its hubris in the conquest of nature, and its epidemic of homelessness and migration, that has shattered the ontological anchorage, the inherited ground of experience, and the intimate cultural networks of support and trust that humans hitherto relied on for a sense of security and meaningful life. 16

A historical understanding of trauma requires looking at patterns to reconstruct how trauma is configured with modernity and read how modernity has traumatized many cultures. Studying media can effectively open this investigation (16). By expanding individual to historical trauma in the study of media, Kaplan and Wang show that catastrophes are the "symptom of deep-lying contradictions of modernity" and living with modernity is to live in shocks and traumas. The flow from trauma to representation is non-unidirectional. Instead, a loop is formed when representation also turns out to be traumatic. Visual media thus is a rich site "in which the traumatic experience of modernity can be recognized, negotiated, and reconfigured" (17).

Climate trauma when informed by postcolonial trauma highlights the vulnerabilities caused by empire and coloniality in the Anthropocene. Likewise, postcolonial trauma must be distinctly characterized from classical trauma studies in order to locate the inadequacy of classical trauma studies in describing the scalar trauma of climate change in the postcolony. Anchored on classical trauma, Todd McGowan, in *Out of Time: Desire in Atemporal Cinema* (2011), explains that atemporal cinema deliberately formally distorts time in the way the story is told but not time *in* the story (8). Distortion is necessary for the spectator to experience temporal confusion in cinema (9). Atemporal films such as *Butterfly Effect* (2004), *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), *The Constant Gardener* (2005), *21 Grams* (2003), and *2046* (2004), dwell with constant repetitions that are not arbitrary manipulations of plot but an illustration of the logic of the drive, the traumatic moment in which the narrative circles around—an attempt to dwell in what was lost and the pleasure of incessantly going back to it (10). McGowan employs classical Freudian analysis of trauma which explains that the drive is a resulting third position of the collision of the first two elements namely the instincts of the individual as a biological organism and the social order that limits or regulates these instincts. The drive is neither any of the two nor a result of their combination. As one enters society, one becomes subjected to a sense of loss because of the biological and social collision. They become "no longer at home in the natural world and is at the same time alienated in the world of culture" (10). To the subject, a substantial feeling of loss drives them to return to that *lost* object, an attempt which always fails (10-11). Psychoanalysis distinguishes the drive from desire because desire holds on to the belief

that what was lost still exists and thus can be recovered and that enjoyment is possible and located in the recovery. But with the drive, enjoyment is in the attempt of returning, in losing and repeating rather than recovering it. Both positions are rather tensed because the drive is bound to fail in obtaining the object that it seeks while desire is insatiable: it becomes yet another desire for something else once the previous thing desired for has been achieved (11). Desiring for the lost object masks the very drive that finds satisfaction in the repetition of loss. The cycle of the drive forms its resistance to a change in temporality, a constancy in which the subject finds its fundamental structure. In this classical formulation of trauma, the subject has no future in sight apart from the repetition of loss (12). "The drive allows for no relief: its burden on the subject is never past, and the future holds no promise for escape from it" (14). Atemporal cinema allows the spectator to experience this cyclical pattern of loss.

The 90s marked the renewed interest on trauma studies that focused mainly on the Jewish Holocaust. Scholars derived their ideas on trauma as they saw the applicability of how trauma was experienced by Holocaust victims and survivors (Ward 4). Much of the theorization are founded on the Freudian principle of melancholia understood to be an endless repetition of memory and mourning as a means to forget (3). One of the most influential theorist of trauma, Cathy Caruth, defines trauma as an "overwhelming experience of sudden and catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena[44]" (4). In this definition, trauma is an issue of memory in which a subject

[44] See Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996)

falls into a cyclical remembering. Sonya Andermahr traces the emergence of trauma studies as an intersection of deconstruction, psychoanalysis and Holocaust literature. Postcolonialists have since pointed out that Cathy Caruth's claim that trauma can link cultures has not been delivered, especially with non-Western subjects, resulting to privileging only white suffering and erasing the specificity of traumas of minor cultures (1). Andermhar enumerates the failures of trauma studies, as argued by Stef Craps, namely the marginalization of non-Western traumatic experiences, the disregard for the validity of other definitions of trauma and recovery, the prescription of "modernist aesthetic of fragmentation and aporia as uniquely suited to the task of bearing witness to trauma," and the lack of acknowledgment of the "connections between metropolitan and non-Western or minority traumas" (2). Classical trauma is single event-based which is not compatible with non-Western trauma such as racism and its damage which could not be pinned down to a single event but to a persistent phenomenon through time.

Initial view of trauma especially espoused by Cathy Caruth and her colleagues precludes representation due to the destruction of "the ordinary mechanisms of consciousness and memory." Language and imagery are not enough to access trauma. Caruth defines the features of the traumatic experience as "unthinkable, lack[s] witnessing, numbing…unrepresentable, [without] narrative [and]…language" (Kaplan and Wang 4). This deconstructionist turn in looking at trauma—the breakdown of the psyche and trauma's irrepresentability—is rooted on Freud's dissociation model. To Caruth, trauma is a response, often not happening at once and immediately, after the event in which the subject is "possessed by an image or event" (Caruth, cited in Kaplan

and Wang 5). The response to which are “repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thought or behaviors” (ibid). This theorization, however appealing and sophisticated, has been challenged on the grounds of its isolation or removal from larger societal and historical currents and its failure to accommodate the possibilities of healing and coping:

> In this theory, then, trauma is a debilitating kind of memory. It is engraved on the body, precisely because the original experience was too overwhelming to be processed by the mind. To be repressed, a memory would have to be cognitively processed, and then forgotten. Thus trauma is viewed as a special form of bodily memory. The memory tries to find a way into consciousness, but ends up only leaking its disturbing and ambivalent traces in the typical traumatic symptoms of flashbacks, hallucinations, phobias, and nightmares. This paradigm had much appeal to humanists in the 1990s. By retreating into a focus on the impasse of the psyche and on the paralysis of the subject, this approach reveals itself as a symptom of withdrawal from the social field and is at risk of ignoring the possibilities of working through and historical change. Dominick LaCapra challenges this notion of psychic paralysis by examining the distinction between acting out and working through. 5

By emphasizing on the possibilities of coping and healing, the agency of the subject previously denied in classical trauma is reinscribed and opens up the experience to historical context and thus historicizes and, I add, collectivizes trauma to better articulate it in conjunction with capitalist modernity enabling a view of trauma as a “historical and

cultural phenomenon" (8). Consequently, trauma becomes representable and accessible through language and image, viewed no longer as distortions and betrayal of the experience but sites of meaning-making that are crucial to understand it.

Classical understanding of trauma is productive in understanding postcolonial subjects and situations in such a way that it describes in parallel what David Lloyd calls the "effects and mechanisms of colonization"[45] in which violence "annihilates the person as subject or agent" through "the overwhelming technological, military and economic power of the colonizer, the violence and programmatically excessive atrocities committed in the course of putting down resistance to intrusion, the deliberate destruction of the symbolic and practical resources of whole populations" (Ward 5). One example that Lloyd gives on objectification is the internalized racism in the work of Fanon in which a black person is stripped of subjectivity and is placed in the hierarchy among objects. Although Lloyd's thinking about the annihilated subject fails to account for the emergence of a new subjectivity that is founded on trauma which now forms the very condition of that subjectivity, he does acknowledge that to invoke the word trauma is to stir up controversy. This is due to the fact that Western writing on psychoanalytic approaches to postcolonialism were Eurocentric and that some ethnic groups do not look at trauma in psychological or existential terms but rather somatically (6). Trauma studies being heavily tied up to the Holocaust could also render invisible the Palestinians' need to articulate their own trauma. What this goes to show is that classical trauma studies has its pitfalls and limitations despite its promise to open up a conversation on global historical

[45] See David Lloyd, "Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?" (2000)

atrocities committed to peoples. Norman Saadi Nikro emphasizes the pressing need on the importance of context in the study of trauma in postcolonial texts. Trauma spills over the frames or pages as an overdetermined result of atrocities, survival, and coping both on the level of the individual and the collective therefore revealing the limits of representation. Nikro observes that since most texts studied to articulate postcolonial trauma are works of fiction, there is an inherent assumption that the works cannot be fully representative of actual social experience (1). The problem even more becomes confounding the moment the texts are treated as allegories that simply reflect, but not in full, its social and historical contexts… "that bear either direct reference or less direct performative trajectories to history, geography, genealogy, and identity" (2). Nikro proposes that the "real time and place" of enunciation must not be ignored, emphasizing the relationship of postcolonial texts or cultural productions in general as responses and implications of the "social disintegration and modalities of social coping" (ibid).

Decolonizing trauma studies is not without pitfalls. The project has risks of objectifying and revictimizing postcolonial subjects as they are folded into discourse as objects of inquiry and the narrative of victimization is repeated, losing the nuance and specificity of their trauma as trauma becomes an umbrella term that flattens diverse and particular ways of coping, responding, and perceiving—ways which could be blurred or merely appropriated once their experience are examined within trauma as a global framework (Martínez-Falquina 125, 131). Martínez-Falquina argues that postcolonial peoples have their unique way of thinking and dealing with trauma. She proposes that the postcolony must not simply be looked at as an area of study but as a site of theory itself

where cultural productions illuminate or perhaps correct and transform existing theories even while new theories emerge out of the specific cultural productions of postcolonial peoples (134). Irene Visser forwards the idea that trauma studies in order to truly decolonize must open itself to non-Western belief systems and practices as they engage with trauma (7). Visser recalls that Caruth in her writings in the 90s did gesture on the idea that trauma has the power to link cultures all over the world but this is still not effectively met in as far as postcoloniality is concerned. The dominant and Eurocentric trauma studies looks at trauma as event-based such (i.e., Holocaust) which has a narrow and "more clearly definable period of history, and a clearer historical sense of victims, perpetrators, and responsibility" (9). In postcolonial trauma studies, there is a broader emphasis on the long duration of colonialism's trauma. In classical Freudian principle, trauma's main features are its crippling effect[46] on the individual, its melancholia, and the injunction that defines the post-traumatic condition. This becomes problematic in postcolonial context since it is confined only within stereotyping the experience as weakening and victimizing while postcoloniality acknowledges other possibilities such as "social activism, recuperation, and psychic resilience" which can be read in many postcolonial texts (11-12). Classical trauma thus has to move from stasis to a dynamics that account for agency and processes that are life-affirming. Another limitation of classical trauma studies that was popular in the 90s is the view that trauma is associated with the breakdown of language and representation, that it is unsayable and that to do otherwise is a betrayal of the traumatic memory. In the work of Judith Herman in *Trauma*

[46] See Eli Park Sorenson, *Postcolonial Studies and the Literary* (2010)

and Recovery, this does not necessarily have to be the case. Narratives can empower and treat effectively the trauma victims when it is verbalized (Visser 13). Moving across other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology, trauma studies veering towards postcoloniality also expands understanding trauma on the level of the collective: "Trauma is now recognized as displaying both centripetal and centrifugal tendencies; trauma is not coherent in cause and effect, but may affect individuals and communities negatively, forcing open pre-existing fault lines, while also possibly affirming a sense of belonging, kinship, and mutual trust" (15).

The scalar threat of climate catastrophe looming ahead calls for a temporal understanding of trauma not only in its pastness but also with regards to the future. E. Ann Kaplan dwells deep into the temporality of trauma in relation to the future in her book *Climate Trauma* by proposing the concept of pre-trauma in which "people suffer from an immobilizing anticipatory anxiety about the future…in fear of a future terrifying event…" (xix) as evidenced in climate dystopian film and fiction. Michael Richardson expands Kaplan's thinking by arguing that "affects of climate catastrophe are traumatically affecting without necessarily being traumatizing: they are jarring, rupturing, disjunctive experiences of future crisis in the now" (1). Looking at the subject position of Kaplan and Richardson as scholars from the Global North who are reading Western film and literature, one cannot help but comment on the undergirding privilege in their tone. Their stance is understandable but it is racially blind. For instance, Richardson goes on saying that

> Part of the challenge for conceptualizing, experiencing, and responding to global warming is that its worst effects are yet to come: it is a catastrophe from the future, one that both has and has not yet arrived. What has not yet happened looms threateningly over any and all present manifestations. Devastating as the contemporary collapse of ecosystems can be, what those collapses mean is always bound up with, or on the other side of, what they portend. Each symptom of global warming is thus both a marker of past destruction and a message from the future of arriving catastrophe. 3

While it is helpful to establish how affects emanating from threats in the future can create damage among subjects and subjectivities in the present, the narrowness of such exploration on the temporal dimension of trauma is dangerous.[47] Climate catastrophes are already experienced by so many communities as we speak, made vulnerable through colonialist and capitalist mechanics both in spectacular and glacial time, that is, channeling Rob Nixon's concept of slow violence, apprehensions and optics of violence are rather visual—needfully evidenced by spectacle—in order to be recognizable instead of looking closely to the rather uneventful long violent processes of suffering the ill effects of exploitation and vulnerability that collectives experience without end. Pre-trauma is inseparable from privilege. The fear of losing does not equal losing and having lost. Populations who are climate victims primarily do not exist in fear of threat but live with catastrophe trying to survive. This is how the Anthropocene is a liquidation of the

[47] I do not intend to diminish the fears and affects of subjects regarding climate threat; affects have different intensities from one subject to another.

present of the climate subaltern while remaining an anticipation of a threat in a future time still unspent by the privileged. The Anthropocene as a power differential is a disjuncture of the resource of time.

In the year 2050, a new legal category will needfully be created to describe an estimate of 250 million people who will be "fleeing not war but weather events and an unlivable terrain, citizens need refuge from a human-caused environmental disaster" (Fay 15). Jennifer Fay, channeling Nixon, conjures the term "developmental refugee" who is fleeing the destructive development projects of the nation. These national developments, as I have mentioned elsewhere, are symbolic of the need for the nation to establish its legitimacy and thus moves its agency in history. However, the displacement and vulnerability of developmental refugees shorten and impoverish their lives adding a temporal dimension to displacement—separation not only from habitats but also from the vitality of cultures that define homeliness (135). The problem lies not only in the degree of vulnerability that is uneven but also the imposition of this vulnerability to generations who did not create this problem (Kim 1-2). Naomi Klein calls for "ways we might respond that are far more inclusive than current campaign models: ways that don't ask suffering people to shelve their concerns about war, poverty, and systemic racism and first "save the world," but that instead demonstrate how all these crises are interconnected, and how the solutions could be, too" (4). Klein takes cue from Edward Said's thought on the process of Othering in *Orientalism* and points out how the other must be othered first so that "once the other has been firmly established, the ground is softened for any transgression: violent expulsion, land theft, occupation, invasion.

Because the whole point of othering is that the other doesn't have the same rights, the same humanity, as those making the distinction. What does this have to do with climate change? Perhaps everything" (5). Klein asserts that the climate emergency is not an emergency of the future and must be seen systematically and globally, implicating "austerity and privatization, of colonialism and militarism, and of the various systems of othering needed to sustain them all…Too many of us fail to make the connection between the guns that take black lives on the streets of US cities and in police custody and the much larger forces that annihilate so many black lives on arid land and in precarious boats around the world" (7). To make these connections is to apprehend more deeply its complexity which I argue is possible through radical aesthetics in film and media that constantly challenge previous notions of what it means to get caught up with the liquidating power of the Anthropocene.

Storm Children: Installation in a Trauma Field

I maintain that apprehending the Anthropocene through cinema coupled with ethical and critical positionalities of the spectator in relation to climate subalterns requires consciously radical aesthetics. The method of Diaz's execution in *Storm Children* masterfully constructs a trauma field created by the Anthropocene in which the spectator is transfixed and established within the new coordinates of the post-national space of climate subalterns. The study of worlding the Anthropocene in film and how the Anthropocene effects a worlding process have been done in abundance in mainstream cinema but their power is lost in the narrative closure and the aesthetics that numb and entertain. In short, the films cannot effectively critique capital by being inside capital as I

have lengthily discussed in chapter two. Jennifer Fay in *Inhospitable World* (2018) points out the parallelism of the Anthropocene and cinema in the worlding process. The Anthropocene shapes and manages worlds and cinema engages in aesthetic worlding with the intention to simulate. Fay examines film with a claim that the anthropogenic environment is mediated and apprehended through cinema: "not only is cinema like the Anthropocene in its uncanny aesthetic effects, but also, insofar as cinema has encouraged the production of artificial worlds and simulated, wholly anthropogenic weather, it is the aesthetic practice of the Anthropocene. Or, to put it more forcefully, cinema helps us to see and experience the Anthropocene as an aesthetic practice" (4). Fay reads film texts that do not directly yield themselves to obvious Anthropogenic readings. Most probably, these film texts displace and confuse moviegoers whose viewing habits make them unfamiliar with the film's aesthetics. It is this displacement, confusion, and unfamiliarity that my theory on spectatorship as installation hinges on.

In theorizing how thought and criticality emerge in an installation and in how radical aesthetics install the spectator's body in the cinematic experience, I go back to Bertolt Brecht's anti-Aristotelianism which destroys audience identification by shattering the illusion of dramatic coherence. The spectator adopts "critical positions in relation to the dramatic spectacle, so as to interrupt and puncture its illusionism as based on aesthetic unity, which in psychological terms would correspond to the illusionism of a secure founding of the self, of a fully integrated selfhood" (Chow 6). This disidentification in consequence makes contrast the alterity or otherness between the observer and the observed. Radical aesthetics makes estrangement possible and enables

the spectator to notice things that are otherwise unnoticeable. Chow illustrates this effect through the concept of the arrival and presence of a stranger by the doorway that changes the dynamics of the scene taking place inside the house, the tableau caught in the act, so to say (14).

Alienation, or estrangement, or in the vocabulary of Shlovsky, *ostranenie* or defamiliarization, is crucial in the process of re-worlding as a cognitive experience, in recognizing the coordinates of the installation field and seeing the spectator's position within space and its objects. Brecht theorizes that alienation is necessary "to make the spectator adopt an attitude of inquiry and criticism in his approach to the incident" (Brecht, qtd. in Chow15). Ironically, Brecht destroys suture in theater through montage to desensationalize affect to spectator (Chow 16) which, when used in film, is a form that may potentially dangerously restore that suture. I propose in this case that the destruction of suture such as in a Diaz film is accomplished not in cutting but in its opposite, the extreme long take. Montage, which clearly had powerful potentials in the studies of Eisenstein, has become the hegemonic form that mainstream cinema utilizes and has therefore made objects, peoples, and moments vanish, that is, the process of rendering has made everything cliche. Montage, as an affective structure, has become—and made things—too familiar. The long take as a radical aesthetics thus restores the loss of things—it alienates and defamiliarizes through an alternative temporal cinematic experience.

Reflexivity happens when thought is aware of its own active processes. Chow defines reflexivity as "a conscious form of staging" (18). This Brechtian principle became

popular in literature and film in which reflexivity finds its objectifying turn, that is, perception is targeted towards an object or a protrusion, one that sticks out and calls attention to itself (ibid). In Diaz's case, the protrusion is duration so that the spectator pays attention to time. When time protrudes, the body becomes visible to itself—expelled, alienated, differentiated, conflicted, ironically captured (as I have argued in Chapter 2). The long take as a form of staging is a paradox of wholeness and brokenness. By rendering duration whole, it breaks the illusion of continuity by putting attention economy into crisis and constructing the polytemporal cinematic experience.

In an installation, one important feature is the "uncertainty of origination," the assemblage of disparate objects, politics involved in the spectacle, and different ways of perceiving. Through a formation of this network, installation precipitates meaning in the incongruence of elements as an opportunity for reflexivity to emerge—always conditional, provisional, and in the making (Chow 19). The spectator, themselves textualized, performs the textualization (21). However, Chow asks a question too important to dismiss: "In the days of proliferating, hypermediatized screens and frames, is staging, which belongs to an older, modernist way of objectifying reflexivity, still meaningful?" (25). Dumbing and numbing, and the reflexive becoming cliche—how can reflexivity be redeemed? As an answer to Chow, I see a sense of potency in radical aesthetics, specifically the extreme long take and single camera technique of Diaz, to sustain the phenomenological demands of cinematic experience regarding alterity, the Global South, and the Anthropocene. Not only is this radical aesthetics alternative, it justifies and constructs alterities, proves that reflexivity is inexhaustible by visualizing

time, and in turn gets to the core of what it means to transcend the privileged Self in relation to its Other. For example, Todd McGowan theorizes on the power of the atemporal form in specific films as necessary for self-transcendence to finally ethically meet the Other. Atemporal cinema, which ironically makes itself reflexive through temporality, distorts the linear conception and consequently confuses the experience of time in cinema. Drawing from Heidegger who asserts that being must be understood as based on temporality, McGowan highlights the failure of Western philosophy to think of the subject not as *subjected* to time but rather emerging from it. As a result of this failure, being is essentialized and completed which prevents the subject from recognizing its constant self-transcendence. This transcendence is necessary to open the possibilities of the present to its futures and the self to its Other (3). Well and good, but Levinas criticizes the position of Heidegger. Heidegger and other phenomenologists articulate the dynamic of being and time in the self while Levinas emphasizes that the self is in fact only possible because of the experience of otherness which emphasizes the ethical import of understanding temporality. The understanding of the self is always relational to that of the Other, revealing the self's arrival at completion[48], not in knowing one's being per se but in recognizing otherness. If each self is rooted on temporality, recognizing self and others therefore is recognizing difference of existences in time (4). Following this logic, homogenous time can be provincialized when placed in a network of temporalities. If the other is configured in the self and vice versa, *other* time is the auto-critique of homogenous time; homogenous time is only possible within heterogeneous times. Only

[48] I suggest the word wholeness based on the line of argumentation here by McGowan via Levinas

in this condition can the possibility of transcendence be conceived, the main requirement in meaningfully relating and maintaining a humane attitude with the Other. Adapting knowledge of temporalities into an ethics of time forwards a moral gravitas on our attitude to and with time which to McGowan is also our attitude towards the Other. "Someone who uses time or views it as a means to be exploited for profit will take up this same attitude toward the other" (4) and goes on to expand this idea of exploitation as the very core of capitalism as it "treats time as an entity that can be broken up into discrete parts in order that it might be bought, sold, and used. Time becomes a quantity rather than a qualitative experience in the process of reification. Reification transforms the temporality (and the labor) of the production process into the spatial form of a commodity" (21). McGowan channels Rodowick who expressed that the link between this ethics of time and cinema is derived "from the intrinsic temporality of the filmic medium" (4). Going to the theater, even alone, is an expression of one's valuations and confrontations with time, and by metonymy, the Other.

The movement from affect to critique enables the spectator to distantiate and possibly identify ideology. But is emotion separate from cognition? If criticality emerges through the capture of the body in the installation, breathing and sensating, is not embodiment therefore vital in the reflexive process—producing other affects, thought crystals, new subjectivities? If thought is privileged and the body is alienated via non absorption, how can experience be articulated which is in fact primarily an experience of the body? Here, Brecht aligns himself with the Kantian divide between the mind and body. This poses a contradiction to ideas of feminists and decolonialists like Haraway, or

Mignolo or hooks who believe in the contradiction and melding of the mind-body unit to advocate for the validity of lived experiences of marginalized and non-western cultures. Can the tools of the master dismantle the master's house?

Grounded on existential phenomenology, Vivian Sobchack explores the interrelationship of embodiments in the cinematic experience in her book *Carnal Thoughts* (2004). Subjectivity is anchored on the body within a space-time and is inseparable from the historical-cultural matrix. However, "the phenomena of our experience cannot be reduced to fixed essences; rather, in existence they have provisional forms and structures and themes and thus are always open to new and other possibilities for both being and meaning" (2). Meaning in this case always emerges from the context of cinematic experience that is always changing and open from one spectatorship to another, meaning that is the synthesis of objective and subjective dimensions of the spectator, visceral-and-cerebral, and in the consciousness of mediation to one's body and with other bodies—whether of co-spectators or of bodies on-screen,—an "irreducible ensemble" she refers to as inter objectivity (4). However, Sobchack notes that

> the irreducibility of embodied consciousness does not mean that body and consciousness, objectivity and subjectivity, are always synchronously entailed or equally valued in our intent or intentionality or that our body and consciousness—even at their most synchronous—are ever fully disclosed each to the other. Furthermore, they are not, in a given experience, necessarily equally valued—sometimes body and sometimes consciousness preoccupy us, and—as in the reversible but differently

> weighted senses of our existence as "objective subjects" and "subjective objects"—one may hold sway over the other. In sum, as Gary Madison writes: "The perceiving subject is itself defined dialectically as being neither (pure) consciousness nor (physical, in itself) body. Consciousness. . . is not a pure self-presence; the subject is present to and knows itself only through the mediation of the body, which is to say that this presence is always mediated, i.e., is indirect and incomplete. 4

To be aware of one's own body, of the body of the other, of the film as a body is integral to the cinematic installation where textuality no longer resides in the film but is a construction in which meaning spills out of the frame, meaning that is the process and the experience itself, and the spectator becomes a component of the text. In her study of intercultural cinema[49] in *The Skin of Film* (1995), Laura Marks emphasizes that film has a "tactile and contagious quality" which can transform spectators by making visible power relations such as racism and colonialism. The audience are implicated in this body of films through lingering impressions which audience pass on to others like palimpsest, creating a circulation "like a series of skin contacts that leave mutual traces" (xii). Marks distinguishes intercultural cinema in its capacity to critique the body as a source of cultural memory (xiii). The context and instance of each viewing, to Marks, expands the film's meaning beyond narrative, unhinged on semiotics, but with how it is experienced by the viewer. The life of the work, so to say, is vitalized by its circulation, leaving traces

[49] Laura Marks defines intercultural cinema as "characterized by experimental styles that attempt to represent the experience of living between two or more cultural regimes of knowledge, or living as a minority in the still majority white, Euro-American West. The violent disjunctions in space and time that characterize diasporan experience—the physical effects of exile, immigration, and displacement—also… cause a disjunction in notions of truth" (1).

in a network of interobjective bodies (20). In alternative cinema, people are tantamount to ideas as the film text textualizes itself and its audience with every viewing.

Storm Children as an installation captures the spectator and renders them provisionally ahistorical, that is, the cinematic experience is non-teleological and the spectator is bombarded with a saturation of contingencies. The film constructs ahistorical subjects borne out of the storm, a post-national phenomenon that challenges the nation discourse. Climate catastrophe in the Anthropocene does not concern itself with national geopolitics as it poses a blanket threat to the global collective destiny. Nation-forming shifts from a topographical process to a temporal one. Since History's project is to forcibly align temporal disjunctures in the national narrative, the disruption of time via climate trauma ruptures the nation-state and forcibly transcends it. As to spectatorship, the non-narrative structure promises no affective fruition except fruition of thought. What is the relationship of uneventfulness and ahistoricality? Historicity is the narrational apparatus of modernity where event is not arbitrary but is with the consent of civilization, conditioned and shaped by power. Non-event therefore, being outside history, is the end of it. Modernity, in this context the Anthropocene, has impacted the climate which in turn created a trauma field. What transpires in this trauma field are non-events that follow the mammoth event that is climate catastrophe. The uneventfulness or excess of dead time imposes on the spectator to witness a rather drifting image of traumatized subjects who are aimlessly moving in the trauma field. The camera pays attention to the lives of subjects and calls on the spectator into an act of witnessing. In this filmic world by Diaz, there is no color. Only a binary of black and white which has an effect of blurring time.

Even when it is day, it seems that it is always afternoon in this village that sprung after the storm, creating an order that is uncannily homogenous. Space and people seem to be outside time or contained in a time of their own. As an effect, the non-progression of non-events reverts the world to, and simulates the spectator's cinematic experience of, cyclical time. In this loss of telos and power, the spectator is destabilized and textualized.

The installation is accomplished by mapping the coordinates of the observer through the single camera which decides where the observer is in the field with each coordinate rendered in extreme duration. The post-national space is assembled through the mapping. Its integrity is arrived at through an accretion of long takes rather than through montage where space is decomposed or analyzed. By placing the single camera in different geographical coordinates around a focal space, a post-national space of trauma is established and the spectator is emplaced in every coordinate, not simultaneously but one long take at a time, effectively capturing the spectator within the installation. The use of single camera transfixes the spectator in each coordinate. This lack of camera motion clashes with human freedom to survey the spatial diegetic elements or turn around or gaze somewhere else (Arnheim 16). The viewing experience disciplines the spectator's body that is trying to map out cognitively the diegetic world and its characters. If the camera does not move, the human eye will inspect and find objects within the screen and is forced to create connections within the frame, meaning that is made possible as a fruition of slow time. The transfixed spectator cannot help but look in the image flowing in actual duration extensively and notice contingencies and minute details which are often elided in mainstream cinema. As the sequence deepens, it

becomes apparent that the subject of the documentary is the climate-trauma field and its post-national subjects, the storm children. Each shot or sequence has no sense of resolution, only a logic of piling up time in which subjects are idle or aimless or if doing labor, are moving to scaffold a life permanently changed by the storm.

Storm Children opens with a long establishing shot of a city half inundated by flood and rain. This is followed by an overflowing river with tall buildings as background, hinting at the age-old problem of flooding in the metro. The river is followed by a close up of floating debris and then the shot of the first set of children who play in the flood. The camera does not move but the subjects move within the flood world. The camera is distant and never intrusive; it stands and waits and does not take a close up of the children's faces. At the background is a graffiti "Tuta ng Kano" which translates as "America's lapdog," obviously commenting on the colonial, neocolonial, and neoliberal relations between the Philippines and the United States. While the city is still flooding, it is pulsating with life that even in a documentary an image of a motorcycle running on a flooded street becomes surreal—its reflection on the water reveals the unstoppability of modernity flowing even in a traumatized space (Figure 13).

The first sequence of the film establishes *Storm Children* as a film about space, specifically of a trauma field where the traumatized subjects, the children, play, work, and wander about. The cut between the shot of the river to the shot of children in the flood contains the master code regarding the temporality of climate trauma: the storm gave birth to new subjects, the children of the storm. To present the re-worlding of the Anthropocene through the typhoon Yolanda in 2013, Diaz films the ship *Eva Jocelyn* and

Figure 13. A motorcycle driver works on flooded streets; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

make it appear imposing in the sunlight. Parked beside the highway, people live within and around Eva Jocelyn. It functions as a wall, a house, and because of its size, it serves as the epicenter of the community thriving around it. Eva Jocelyn is a semiotically rich object of climate catastrophe, the organizing principle of a village reconfigured by storm into a trauma field (Figure 14). Giant waves during the storm surge pushed it inland from the sea and Eva Jocelyn, among other ships, bulldozed the littoral dwellings of people in Tacloban and killed half of its population. The village is a reorganization of a world where life thrives after the climate reconfigures it in a chaotic and deadly worlding process. In many moments in the film, people's movements in the trauma field are punctuated by the rain, emphasizing how nature and climate function as the temporal logic of human activity. In another sequence, the water-fetching child is seen in different

Figure 14. Eva Jocelyn; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

coordinates. The camera does not follow the child's movement but analyses his emplacement always in relation to where the camera/spectator is. Each shot comments that anywhere you look, it is all the same. In a sense, it presents a new kind of homogeneity that is more pronounced than the hypothetical homogeneity of the nation-state. The mapping and reference to previous coordinates are done through deep focus (Figure 15). In an earlier sequence, two children play and scavenge along the bridge. The single camera is placed on their right, then to their left, then behind them—the geographical coordinates around the scavenging-space (Figure 16). Once in a while, a raindrop falls on the camera lens and the subjects look at the camera which punctures the viewing experience. The film becomes extra reflexive by breaking the fourth wall and the audience is reminded of their being installed. The frame juxtaposes vitality and ruins in what Mukherjee may refer to as *ruination* which "encapsulates the widespread feeling of being amidst slow (and sometimes accelerating) environmental decay, depletion, and exhaustion… the working conditions and/or lived worlds of people who are inhabiting the ruins-in-the-making" (290). As the flood gathers the garbage to a heap, it becomes easier for the children to get them. Ryan Canlas calls this accumulation of images of debris a symptom of the density piling of capitalism (324). In a sequence where two children are constantly digging, the spectator is made to witness their random act of excavating in the ruins (Figure 17). The children do not talk and there is no way for the spectator to know their story, their background, their identity, their motivation. After a while, the unproductive digging appears like a desperate act of recovery of what might have been lost or still has the chance to be saved. At first, the digging gestures are small

Figure 15. Extreme long shot of a laboring child from different coordinates; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

Figure 16. Storm children scavenging from garbage under the bridge; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

Figure 17. Aimless digging; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

but they later on intensify into big gestures. Are they looking for dead bodies? Are they brothers? Are they orphans? Installed within a pile of destruction in an extreme long take, every shot becomes agonizing for the spectator until a sense of helplessness of the subjects create an air of despair.

This restrain for the spectator goes on until more than the first half of the film when they are only allowed to move as the camera, handheld, follows the children roaming around the village. This is after the spectator gets a reconnaissance of the trauma field through an aggregate of film sequences that function as a sort of cartographic assemblage of the village. Finally, the subjects speak of the catastrophe and we only learn that the younger boy lost his mother, grandmother, and siblings when their house was hit by one of the ships. The storm metaphorically gave birth to these children by taking away the children's family (Figure 18). At this point, trauma is acknowledged and becomes

Figure 18. The children recount the catastrophe; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

effable and the spectator passes from being an observer to a witness, possibly deepening an installation in which

> witnessing involves not just empathy and motivation to help, but understanding the structure of injustice—that an injustice has taken place—rather than focusing on a specific case. Once this happens one may feel obligated to take responsibility for specific injustices. Art that invites us to bear witness to injustice goes beyond moving us to identify with and help a specific individual, and prepares us to take responsibility for preventing future occurrence. "Witnessing" thus involves a stance that has public meaning or importance and transcends individual empathic or vicarious suffering to produce community. Kaplan 23

Diaz secures the texture and character of the trauma field for the spectator by not allowing them to move and denying them of the characters' identities and narratives in the first half. This effectively triggers many questions and thought constellations for the spectator who is installed and yet alienated at the same time. The mobility and speech that follow in the second half heightens the stasis and silence in the first. More importantly, the spectator now a witness is let in more fully in the trauma field as the subjects are humanized by being able to put into language the trauma that changed their lives, by tracing their network of relationships in the community, by acknowledging the traumatized environment not merely as a space of pain but also of survival, play, work, friendships.

Life thriving in the village, however, does not change the film's tone in not glorifying resiliency. *Storm Children* presents things as they are: bleak, destroyed, heart-rending, aimless. In a rather endearing final shot in the film, Diaz captures the exhilaration of children playing in the sea. The play is a cycle of jumping from the ship and climbing to its highest level, screaming and oblivious of the rain (Figure 19). Leading Diaz scholar Nadin Mai speaks of the final sequence as

> rather hopeful, and perhaps the most hopeful ending I have ever come across in Diaz's work. In a long shot, we see children using the big ships as an opportunity for diving. They make the best out of the situation, as children always do. Only much later will they realise what has actually happened to them. Diaz uses slow-motion for this scene, capturing a strange sense of joy. After all, he once mentioned that Filipinos were resistant, had to be resistant. They do not give up easily. All these catastrophes do not allow them to give up. The ending of *Storm Children* is the most explicit demonstration of this. Despite the gravity of the situation, there are small glimpses of hope and joy, leaving the viewer with mixed feelings.

Describing the children as "making the best out of the situation" and in the state of unknowing regarding the recent tragedy of their lives romanticizes resilience that has often been utilized by the government to cover up their inefficiency in addressing survivors of climate catastrophes for several decades and downgrades the children's knowledge of the intensity and depth of the event. Why does Diaz have to render this

sequence in slow motion and without sound.? The slow motion and the muting of sound starkly create a different effect: the play looks like a simulation of what may have transpired during the storm for the children to survive.

Figure 19. Play/struggle in slow motion; *Storm Children* (2014) by Lav Diaz

The act of swimming, pulling on ropes, climbing, and jumping with the camera recording them from afar exude the energy of struggle and desperation in the midst of a life-threatening catastrophe. Muting deletes the play's laughter and makes it disturbing. Time is decomposed via slow motion which, in the words of Cortade, situates "a tension between movement and immobility, giving rise to a "tragedy" of duration, and also imbues the image with transparency, revealing the hidden movements of reality which would otherwise remain invisible to the naked eye, thus making slow motion a "microscope of time" (162). Instead of the singularity of *joy*, it is the plurality of grief,

joy, uncertainty, and vitality that reveal themselves in the slowing down of motion, the simultaneity of the children's dealing with trauma and their creative expression of agency. By slowing down, Diaz magnifies action but ironically makes the same shot fast because it punctures the rather slow pacing of long durations. The difference is unique and sharp that the slow motion exceedingly becomes a site for interpretation, thus an exception to dead time but rather a moment of semiotic vitality. The slow motion reminds me of Epstein's concept of the photogénie, "a flicker of an expression that seems to contain all the meaning in a scene" (Ivins). According to Germane Dulac, as cited by Cortade, tics, change in movement, and sound are intensified by slow motion (163). By putting together stillness and movement, the spectator perceives time uniquely (164), becoming aware not only of objects on screen but between screen and spectator. According to Bazin, "the function of slow motion does not lie in demonstrating the power of the technique, but rather in capturing and organically revealing the ambiguous stages of the deployment of movement as duration" (Cortade 173). Lav Diaz reveals the temporal dimension of the tragedy as an effect of slowing down motion—traumatized subjects move on with their lives but motion is not to be regarded as an absolution of the collective responsibility of exploitative empires, despotic regimes, and the actual agents of the Anthropocene to answer for the environmental injustice that decimated the habitats and worlds of vulnerable populations in the Global South. Grief is simultaneous with the will to live but this agency is not forgiveness nor a call to charity.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This dissertation springs from a need to criticize the systemic methods of oppression taking place in the neocolony, methods that implicate a corrupted nation-form built out of colonial legacies and neocapitalist mechanics. A major challenge of pursuing a project that is an offspring of scholarship and activism is to surrender its pretense of being solely informed by what has transpired in *a* field's conversation and where that conversation is now. It was clear to me from the beginning that this study was to perform an admixture of sorts. The two strands—the humanities and social sciences—that this dissertation weaves together is an ugly reflection of the hybrid or the monster that Bruno Latour grappled with in his meditations about modernity in *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991).[50]

The temporal auto-critiques I explore in the last four chapters on persistence, which examines the nation-form as an enclosure of death; autonomy, which is the ideal position of land-based indigeneity; fluidity, which highlights the extreme self-abjection of the Badjao as an assertion of their sovereignty on water; and transcendence, which argues

---

[50] Latour talks of three distinct approaches to thinking about the world by critics: naturalization, socialization, and deconstruction. He clarifies that though his critique on modernity touches on all three, he is not talking of nature *or* politics *or* "discourse, representation, language, texts, rhetorics" (5). Each of the three is reductionist in some sense and incompletist because they are exclusivist. The three approaches must be separate from each other if we were to prevent an encounter with a monster or a grotesque creature, meaning these three must not be carried out simultaneously or else we run into confusion: "Our intellectual life remains recognizable as long as epistemologists, sociologists, and deconstructionists remain at arm's length, the critique of each group feeding on the weaknesses of the other two. We may glorify the sciences, play power games or make fun of the belief in a reality, but we must not mix these three caustic acids" (6). For Latour, *nature-culture* is inescapable. He insists of a network that views the modern world as a mere part of a continuum which allows the flow of traditional practices, variations in the pacing of the development of knowledge, evolution of societies and actors, and changes of beliefs (48).

that climate catastrophes re-organize the nation space to a trauma field, illustrate the chaos and breakdown of modernity. These auto-critiques, being rooted on multiple temporalities, compete with and complicate the nation-form. They comprise the second and larger component of the theory of *polytemporality* which I was initially only proposing as a theory of film aesthetics and spectatorship. Polytemporality as a theory of film illustrates how radical aesthetics of alternative cinema of the Global South visualizes the strands of time that are simultaneous in the cinematic experience. The main thought is that aesthetics that goes against spectatorial habits conditioned by mainstream cinema can reflexively direct the spectator's consciousness to their body and thought process, thereby moving from affect to affect-and-critique. Mainstream cinema as entertainment follows the logic of the homogenous time of capital while alternative cinema dismantles such temporal homogeneity to unmask the labor that is involved in watching films. That is why we feel and think that some films work us out. This experience is part of alternative cinema's power to extend textuality beyond the frame. Meaning goes beyond the narrative. The cinematic experience is itself the text where the spectator is destabilized and decentered—textualized and textualizing so to speak. In my study of Lav Diaz's *Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon,* I argued that his extreme long take and static single-camera technique places the attention economy into crisis and creates an inabsorption that makes it reflexive. I push this exploration on reflexivity further in my study of Diaz's *Storm Children* where the single static camera and its extreme long take effectively install the spectator within new geographical coordinates where the spectator is transfixed one long take at a time around a climate subaltern to form a cartography of a trauma field—a

reorganization of the nation-space caused by climate catastrophe in the Anthropocene. In my study of Mendoza's *Manoro*, I problematized how its radical aesthetics of cinéma vérité and documentary can get in the way of effectively delivering its advocacy to an audience generally and chronically conditioned by mainstream aesthetics. Its failure to grip its audience stems from clashing temporalities of spectatorship habits. The only exception in my examination of radical aesthetics is in *Thy Womb*. It is optics, not aesthetics, that is radical in the film. By optics, I refer to the prevalent view of the majority culture in the Philippines who look down on the Badjao people for not being able to assimilate with the life ways inland. For decades, the Badjao are portrayed by media as nomadic and subalternized as urban refuse. *Thy Womb* does not negate this optics but challenges the abjection to an extreme. The Badjao's self-abjection emphasizes that it is not integration and sedentarization that they need but littoral sovereignty and freedom to culturally reproduce themselves. In this case, extreme abjection interrogates mainstream temporality to say to its face that it is not wrong—it is extremely wrong.

This dissertation can go on in illustrating the many ends of modernity through the un-viability of the nation-form and the power of radical aesthetics in according a cinematic experience necessary to inhabit otherness—not to colonize it but to sincerely begin enacting justice. My concluding here does not in any way close the possibilities of polytemporality as a theory of film and as a critique to capitalism, national sovereignty, and the Anthropocene. For example, moving forward, polytemporality can serve as a method for fifth cinema to capture new temporalities of refugees and stateless collectives. For the refugee crisis is clearly an extra national conundrum. Most importantly, fifth

cinema is a cinema of self-fashioning even when the self and its future is dangerously in transit. The call for transcendence in the Anthropocene is an opportunity to reinscribe the importance of solidarity of indigenous peoples all over the world who have parallels and similarities in their cosmovisions and planetary imaginations. This does not suggest to romanticize their worldviews, spiritualities, and regard for the environment but only emphasize the fact that relationality and transcendence are pre-modern concepts which invite re-examinations to unlearn modernist and materialist ways of understanding ecology and perhaps bring us into thinking of bio-regions and culture zones which challenge the nationalist and statist model. Emphasizing the move from spatial to temporal apprehension of oneself in the age of accelerated migration to and saturation with digital and screen life, polytemporality can construct the refractions that one experiences with simultaneous subjectivities and identities. What about the digital subalterns who creatively make-do with *unique* media infrastructures and practices in the Global South? Or the weird ways of how people experience time in a pandemic? The change in bodily rhythms? The restrictions on mobility? The sight, mediation, and meditation of death? All these are temporalities that demand recognition to clarify the current confusion caused by the singular temporality of modernity. Recognizing these temporalities in film and media requires a broader study of archives, media formations, spectator's habits, and calls for a sustained engagement with otherness, which does not yield itself completely despite the complexity of our theorizations. The ethical and epistemological considerations in the study of the other always remain sensitive and

precarious for both the scholar and their subject of study. Alterity, arguably, is the limit of theory.

Certainly, casting the net more widely in the study of Philippine independent cinema[51] to prioritize those films that are produced but undocumented and understudied from the regions outside Manila will yield exuberant strategies, politics, and preoccupations of emerging filmmakers and the locals that they collaborate with. Transgressing through comparative methods the nation-state boundaries in a rather tensed and diverse region such as the Southeast Asia may provide instructive patterns about how the national model needs to adjust based on the cultural contexts and needs of its populations. We might not have to accept Latour's suggestion that we have indeed never been modern just to be able to make sense of modernity's disjunctures. Or that modernity has not really arrived in the first place. For it is in these remote regions, south of South, that we experience multiple graduated versions of modernity—perpetually re-defining it but never completing the task. Moving forward, the assessment of the cinema of Lav Diaz will have to evolve based on the fact that his aesthetics in terms of duration, collaboration, and funding is changing, though his politics remains piercingly consistent. As for Mendoza, his present expression of support to the oppressive and bloody regime of Rodrigo Duterte undermines the critical power that his films wield in the past years.

---

[51] Thinking about the corpus of films in this dissertation, *independent cinema* as a category may well be replaced with *ecocinema* to highlight their ecocritical sensibilities—but only provisionally, since the term independent strategically situates the corpus of films and their political relation to and against mainstream cinema. Ecocinema does make a sharper category but it can also broaden in the sense that any film can be considered as ecocinema since environment is an expansive concept. Using ecocinema in the title of the dissertation, for example, will make chapter two stick out because the main framework is not ecocritical.

The sharp experience of living in subaltern spaces and being aware of the multiple ways in apprehending time, firstly, before finally crossing seven thousand miles across the Pacific to formally theorize time has complicated my theorization and mixed up my methods. Growing up, I did not know that it was not our fault that our subaltern lives in that part of the world were unlivable. Agency fulfilled both our abjection and survival and we thought that the cruelty of the world was a fact we only needed to accept as our lot. Some would think that if one lived the phenomena first before they theorized them, they could avail of the advantage of a first hand experience that validates theory, not the other way around. But translating one's body as archive and epistemology carried a violence which was hard to recognize or comprehend during the process of my writing. Being an activist, I was often at odds with how Western scholarship sought to highlight subaltern agency, which, when carried too far only rubs salt to the wound. There is no glamor in extreme abjection. Non movement of discourse, too, is its own dynamic, just to make sure that the realities that serve as the dynamo of the scholarship that addresses injustice are not left behind—like a head leaving its feet. Being a scholar, I maintain that a constant dialectic of and about images is important to push realities into possibilities. Or possibilities into realities. To see more clearly the things that might have escaped us. Because if we see things everyday, we stop seeing them. Times I thought I have found answers to some questions and understood that though talking and yearning for justice in scholarship does not bring justice, it can liberate. Because by then we no longer have to see the world through a rose-colored glass nor see ourselves in the shattered pieces of that

glass. We no longer have to continue accepting that the world has every right to spin roughly on us.

REFERENCES CITED

Abbas, Ackbar. *The Politics of Disappearance,* University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

Abu-Lughod, Lila. *Do Muslim women need saving?*, Harvard University Press, 2013.

Aguila. Directed by Eddie Romero, performances by Fernando Poe Jr., Amalia Fuentes, and Christopher de Leon, Bancom Audiovision, 1980.

Ahmad Nasir, Jamal. *The Status of Women under Islamic Law and Modern Islamic Legislation,* 3rd ed., Brill, 2009.

Alipala, Julie. "Badjao being moved out of the sea." *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* 30 Nov. 2013, www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/537923/badjao-being-moved-out-of-the-sea. Accessed 02 Sep. 2020.

_ _. "Tribe relying on sea for work being relocated to bunkhouses." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 13 Apr. 2014, www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/593909/tribe-relying-on-sea-for-work-being-relocated-to-bunkhouses#:~:text=On%20Saturday%2C%20the%20Badjaos%20(sea,eyes%20of%20soldiers%20and%20policemen. Accessed 14 Sep. 2020.

Andermahr, Sonya, editor. *Decolonizing Trauma Studies: Trauma and Postcolonialism,* MDPI, 2016.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, 2006.

Angeles, Vivienne. "Moros in the media and beyond: Representations of Philippine Muslims." *Contemporary Islam,* 2010, vol. 4, pp. 29-53.

_ _. "Philippine Muslims on Screen: From Villains to Heroes." *Journal of Religion and Film,* vol. 20, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1-19.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization,* University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Ang Araw Bago ang Wakas. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Hazel Orencio and Noel Miralles, Sine Olivia Pilipinas, 2016.

An Argument About Marriage. Directed by John K. Marshall, Documentary Educational Resources, 1969.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *Film as Art*, University of California Press, 1957.

Austria, Jane. *Expanding the Envelope: The Convergence of Indigenous Aeta Organization and an External Issue-Based Community Organizing Model in Tarlac, Philippines*. Diss. University of Florida, 2008. Web. 1 June 2012.

Barbara. Comment on *From What Is Before*. uoregon.kanopy.com/video/what.

Batang West Side. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Yul Servo, Joel Torre, Gloria Diaz, JMCN, Hinabing Pangarap Productions, 2002.

Baumgärtel, Tilman. "Digital is liberation theology: Interview with Lav Diaz." *Southeast Asian Independent Cinema*, edited by Tilman Baumgärtel, Hong Kong University Press, 2012, pp. 171-178.

_ _. "An inexpensive film should start with an inexpensive story." *Southeast Asian Independent Cinema*, edited by Tilman Baumgärtel, Hong Kong University Press, 2012, pp. 155-170.

_ _, editor. *Southeast Asia Independent Cinema,* Hong Kong University Press, 2012.

Bazin, Andre and Hugh Gray. "The Ontology of the Photographic Image." *Film Quarterly,* vol. 13, no. 4, Summer 1960, pp. 4-9.

Beller, Jonathan. *The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle,* Dartmouth College Press, 2006.

—-. "The Spectatorship of the Proletariat." *boundary 2*, vol. 23, no. 2, Autumn 1995, pp. 171-228.

Bennington, Geoffrey. "Postal politics and the institution of the nation." *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K Bhabha, Routledge, 1990, pp. 121-137.

Bergstrom, Anders. "Cinematic Past Lives: Memory, Modernity, and Cinematic Reincarnation in Apichatpong Weerasethakul's "Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives". *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal,* vol. 48, no. 4, December 2015, pp. 1-16.

Berila, Beth. "Engaging the Land/Positioning the Spectator: Environmental Justice Documentaries and Robert Redford's The Horse Whisperer and A River Runs Through It." *Framing the World: Explorations in Ecocriticism and Film,* edited by Paula Willoquet-Maricondi, University of Virginia, 2010, pp. 116-132.

Boehler, Natalie. “Haunted Time, Still Photography and Cinema as Memory: The Dream Sequence in *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*.” *Journal of Modern Literature in Chinese*, vol. 12, no. 1, December 2014, pp. 62-72.

Bonzo, Lucille. “Mindanao Lumad struggle for empowerment through education.” *Davaotoday.com*, 16 Nov. 2019, www.davaotoday.com/main/human-rights/mindanao-lumad-struggle-for-empowerment-through-education-part-1-of-4/. Accessed 28 Jan. 2020.

Bracamonte, Nimfa L. et al. “From the Seas to the Streets: The Bajau in Diaspora in the Philippines.” *International Conference on Humanities, Society and Culture IPEDR,* vol. 20, no. 2, 2011, pp. 287-291.

Brennan, Timothy. “The national longing for form.” *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K Bhabha, Routledge, 1990, pp. 44-70.

Briosos, Fernando. “February 2015 — Formation of Aeta Tribe Foundation. ” *Aetatribes.org*, Feb. 2015, www.aetatribes.or/february-2015. Accessed 19 Jun. 2020.

Brown, Wendy. “Religious Freedom’s Oxymoronic Edge.” *Politics of Religious Freedom*, edited by Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Saba Mahmood, and Peter G. Danchin, The University of Chicago Press, 2015, pp. 324-334.

Brown, William. “*Melancholia*: The Long, Slow Cinema of Lav Diaz.” *Slow Cinema*, edited by Tiago de Luca and Nuno Barradas Jorge, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, pp. 112-122.

Brugidou, Jeremie and Louette Fabien. “‘AnthropOcean’: Oceanic perpectives and cephalopodic imaginaries moving beyond land-centric ecologies.” *Social Science Information*, vol. 57, no. 3, 2018, pp. 359-385.

Burton, Erlinda and Chona Echavez. *Exclusion of and Discrimination against the Indigenous Communities: Case Study of the Philippines,* Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 2011.

Çağlayan, Emre. “The Aesthetics of Boredom: Slow Cinema and the Long Take in *Once Upon a Time in Anatolia.*” *Projections*, vol. 10, no. 1, Summer 2016, pp. 63-85.

Canlas, Ryan. “The Time of Poverty and the Image of Real.” *Positions,* vol. 19, no. 2, Fall 2011, pp. 307-334.

Cemetery of Splendour. Directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, performances by Jenjira Pongpas Widner, Banlop Lomnoi, Jarinpattra Rueangram, Kick the Machine Films, Illumination Films, 2015.

Cepeda, Cody. "GMA head writer Suzette Doctolero on not casting a real Badjao to play lead role in 'Sahaya'." *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* 04 Apr. 2019, www.entertainment.inquirer.net/324704/gma-head-writer-suzette-doctolero-on-not-casting-a-real-badjao-for-sahaya. Accessed 05 Sep. 2020.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change." *New Literary History*, Vol. 43, No. 1, Winter 2012, pp. 1-18.

_ _. "Time of History and Times of Gods." *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital,* edited by Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 35-60.

Chanan, Michael. "Uses and Abuses of Documentary." *Journal of Media Practice*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2001, pp. 83-88.

Chandran, Rina. "Driven from home, Philippine indigenous people long for their land." *Reuters*, 18 Apr. 2018, www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-landrights-crime/driven-from-home-philippine-indigenous-people-long-for-their-land-idUSKBN1HQ034. Accessed 21 Jun. 2020.

Chatterjee, Partha. "The Politics of the Governed." *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World,* Columbia University Press, 2004.

_ _. *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse,* Zed Books, 1993.

Cheney, Zachary. *Stylist Politics: Long Takes in Post-1945 Cinema.* Diss. University of Oregon, 2017. Web. 1 November 2019.

Chester, David. "Theology and disaster studies: The need for dialogue." *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research,* vol. 146, 2005, pp. 319– 328.

Chow, Rey. *Entanglements, or Transmedial Thinking About Capture,* Duke University Press, 2012.

"Cinema Verité." *The Columbia Film Language Glossary,* www.filmglossary.ccnmtl.columbia.edu/term/cinema-verite/. Accessed 02 Jul. 2020.

Clarkson, Daniel. “The “Inescapable Need and Possibility” of Third Cinema.” *NewPolitics,* 27 Feb. 2018, newpol.org/inescapable-need-and-possibility-third-cinema/. Accessed 1 June 2020.

Conde, Carlos H. “Dispatches: The Philippine Picture of Badjao Displacement.” *Human Rights Watch*, 27 May 2016, www.hrw.org/news/2016/05/27/dispatches-philippine-picture-badjao-displacement. Accessed 5 Sep. 2020.

Cooppan, Vilashini. *Worlds Within National Narratives and Global Connections in Postcolonial Writing,* Stanford University Press, 2009.

Cortade, Ludovic. “The “Microscope of Time”: Slow Motion in Jean Epstein’s Writings.” *Jean Epstein: Critical Essays and New Translations,* edited by Sarah Keller and Jason Paul, Amsterdam University Press, 2012, pp. 161-176.

Cortile Cascino. Directed by Robert Young and Michael Roemer, NBC, 1962.

Crossfire. Directed by Arnel Mardoquio, performances by Ac Macheca, Alexis Libres, and Perry Dizon, Skyweaver Productions and Red Motion Media, 2011.

Davis, Kimberly Chabot. “White Filmmakers and Minority Subjects: Cinéma vérité and the Politics of Irony in ‘Hoop Dreams’ and ‘Paris is Burning’.” *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 64, no. 1, Winter 1999, pp. 26-47.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema I: The Movement-Image.* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

—-. *Cinema II: The Time-Image.* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, University of Minnesota Press, 1989.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth. *Allegories of the Anthropocene,* Duke University Press, 2019.

_ _. “Submarine Futures of the Anthropocene.” *Comparative Literature,* 2017, vol. 69, no.1, pp. 32-44.

Deloughrey, Elizabeth and Tatiana Flores. “Submerged Bodies: The Tidalectics of Representability and the Sea in Caribbean Art.” *Environmental Humanities*, vol. 12, no. 1, May 2020, pp. 132-166.

De Luca, Tiago. “Slow Time, Visible Cinema: Duration, Experience, and Spectatorship.” *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 1, Fall 2016, pp. 23-42.

De Luca, Tiago and Nuno Barradas Jorge, editors. *Slow Cinema*, Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

Diaz, Lav. "Emancipated Cinema: A Conversation with Lav Diaz." *Youtube*, uploaded by MUBI, 20 April 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eyc8nrIOWvE.

——. "Lav Diaz in Conversation." *Lumen Journal*, by May Adadol Ingawanij, Graiwoot Chulphongsathorn, Wiwat Lertwiwatwongsa and Alexis Tioseco, 31 Jul. 2009, www.academia.edu/5022828/A_Conversation_with_Lav_Diaz. Accessed 6 May 2017.

Diaz, Paz H. "Prejudice and Pride in the Philippine Entertainment Media: Constructing the Muslim Image in Selected Films in the Philippines." *Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication,* n.d.

Doane, Mary Ann. *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive,* Harvard University Press, 2002.

Dreese, Donelle N. "Psychic Reconfigurations of Culture and Place: Sites of Confrontation and Refuge." *Ecocriticism: Creating Self and Place in Environmental and American Indian Literatures.* Peter Lang, 2002, pp. 47-70.

Duara, Prasenjit. *The Crisis of Global Modernity,* Cambridge University Press, 2015.

_ _. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China,* The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

DuBois, W. E. Burghardt. *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches*, A. C. McClurg & Co., 1904.

During, Simon. "Literature — Nationalism's other? The case for revision." *Nation and Narration*, edited by Homi K Bhabha, Routledge, 1990, pp. 138-153.

Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Elryan de Vera, Angie Ferro, and Pen Medina, Sine Olivia, Paul Tañedo Inc., Ebolusyon Productions, 2005.

Emu Ritual at Ruguri. Directed by Roger Sandall, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1968.

Ermitanio, Noli A. "Badjao beggars on her mind." *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* 23 Dec. 2012, www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/328893/badjao-beggars-on-her-mind. Accessed 20 Sep. 2020.

Espinosa, Julio Garcia. “For an Imperfect Cinema.” *Jump Cut*, no. 20, 1979, pp. 24-26.

Eternity and A Day. Directed by Theo Angelopoulos, performances by Bruno Ganz, Isabelle Renauld, Fabrizio Bentivoglio, Artistic License Merchant, 1998.

Execution of Czolgosz, with Panorama of Auburn Prison. Directed by Edwin S. Porter, Edison Studios, 1901.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth,* translated by Richard Philcox, Grove Press, 2004.

Fay, Jennifer. *Inhospitable Worlds: Cinema in the Time of the Anthropocene,* Oxford University Press, 2018.

The Feast. Directed by Timothy Asch, Documentary Educational Resources, 1970.

“Film School Essentials: Cinéma vérité.” *Indie Film Hustle*, 19 Dec. 2019, www.indie filmhustle.com/cinema-verite/#:~:text=Cinema%20Verite%20is%20a %20French,in%20day%20to%20day%20lives. Accessed 31 May 2020.

Florentina Hubaldo, CTE. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Hazel Orencio, Kristine Kintana and Noel Sto. Domingo, Sine Olivia, 2012.

Flory, Dan. “Race and Imaginative Resistance in James Cameron’s *Avatar*.” *Projections*, vol. 7, no. 2, Winter 2013, pp. 41-63.

Foster Child. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Cherry Pie Picache, Kier Segismundo, and Jiro Manio, Seiko Films, 2007.

Gabriel, Teshome. “Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films.” *Teshome Gabriel: Articles and Other Works*, teshomegabriel.net/towards-a-critical-theory-of-third-world-films. Accessed 10 May 2017.

Gaillard, Jean-Christophe and Virginie Le Masson. “Traditional Societies' Response to Volcanic Hazards in the Philippines: Implications for Community-Based Disaster Recovery.” *Mountain Research and Development*, vol. 27, no. 4, Nov. 2007, pp. 313-317.

Genus, Pan. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Nanding Josef, Bart Guingona, Don Melvin Boongaling, Sine Olivia Pilipinas, 2020.

Getino, Octavio and Fernando Solanas. “Toward a Third Cinema.” *Tricontinental*, no. 14, October 1969, pp. 107-132.

Gibbens, Sarah. "'Sea Nomads' are First Known Humans Genetically Adapted to Diving." *National Geographic,* 19 Apr. 2018, www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2018/04/bajau-sea-nomads-free-diving-spleen-science/. Accessed 25 Sep. 2020.

Gibbs, John and Douglas Pye, editors. *The Long Take: Critical Approaches,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Ginsburg, Faye et al. "Introduction." *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain*, University of California Press 2002.

Goeman, Mishuana. *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations*, University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

Goodbye, Dragon Inn. Directed by Tsai Ming-liang, performances by Lee Kang-sheng, Chen Shiang-chyi, Kiyonobu Mitamura, 2004.

Grønstad, Asbjørn. "Slow Cinema and the Ethics of Duration." *Slow Cinema*, edited by Tiago de Luca and Nuno Barradas Jorge, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, pp. 273-284.

Grosoli, Marco. "Space and time in the land of the end of history." *The Global Auteur: The Politics of Authorship in 21st Century Cinema,* edited by Seung-hoon Jeong and Jeremi Szaniawski, Bloomsbury Academic, 2016, pp. 303-322.

Guha, Pujita. *A Century of Dying: Anthropocenic Imaginaries and the Cinema of Lav Diaz*. Diss. Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2017.

Guneratne, Anthony and Wimal Dissanayake, editors. *Rethinking Third Cinema*, Routledge, 2003.

Hageman, Andrew. "Ecocinema and Ideology: Do Ecocritics Dream of a Clockwork Green?" *Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, edited by Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt, Routledge, 2013, pp. 63-86.

Halberstam, Jack. "The Wild Beyond: With and for the Undercommons." Foreword in *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study* by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, Minor Compositions, 2013, pp. 2-12.

Hall, Jeanne. "Realism as a Style in Cinéma vérité: A Critical Analysis of 'Primary'." *Cinema Journal*, vol. 30, no. 4, Summer 1991, pp. 24-50.

Harney, Stefano and Fred Moten. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, Minor Compositions, 2013.

Henderson, Brian. "The Long Take." *A Critique on Film Theory*, Dutton, 1980, pp. 314 -324.

Heremias: Unang Aklat - Ang Alamat ng Prinsesang Bayawak. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Ronnie Lazaro and Sid Lucero, Sine Olivia, 2006.

Hindstrom, Hanna. "Philippines: Militarization and Lumad cultural rights." *Minority Stories,* www.stories.minorityrights.org/cultureandheritage/chapter/militarization-and-the-assault-on-lumad-cultural-rights-in-the-southern-philippines/. Accessed 4 Apr. 2020.

Horton, Andrew. "The Master of Slow Cinema: Space and Time—Actual, Historical, and Mythical—in the Films of Theo Angelopoulos." *Cineaste*, vol. 36, no. 1, Winter 2010, Cineaste Publishers, pp. 23-27.

Huling Balyan ng Buhi. Directed by Sherad Anthony Sanchez, performances by Ronald Arguelles, Jelieta Mariveles-Ruca, and Marilyn Roque, Cinema One Originals, Salida Davao and Light See, 2006.

Ang Hupa. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Joel Lamangan, Piolo Pascual and Shaina Magdayao, Sine Olivia Pilipinas, Spring Films, 2019.

Ileto, Reynaldo C. "Outlines of a Nonlinear Employment of Philippine History." *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital,* edited by Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd, Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 98-131.

Ingawanij, May Adadol. "Long Walk to Life: The Films of Lav Diaz." *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry*, vol. 40, Autumn/Winter 2015, University of Chicago Press, pp. 102-115.

Ingawanij, May Adadol and Benjamin McKay, editors. *Glimpses of Freedom: Independent Cinema in Southeast Asia,* Cornell University Press, 2012.

Ingram, David. "The Aesthetics and Ethics of Eco-film Criticism." *Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, edited by Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt, Routledge, 2013, pp. 43-61.

Invisible Town. Directed by Allan Balberona, Bakunawa Productions, 2019.

Ivins, Laura. “What is photogénie?” *Indiana University Cinema,* 20 Jul. 2017, blogs.iu.edu/aplaceforfilm/2017/07/20/what-is-photogenie/. Accessed 3 Mar. 2018.

Jameson, Frederic. “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism.” *Social Text,* no. 15, Autumn 1986, pp. 65-88.

Javadi, Parisa Hakim. “Vicariously Violent: The Case of Lav Diaz’s From What Is Before.” *Offscreen,* vol. 22, no. 3, March 2018, offscreen.com/view/lav-diaz-from-what-is-before. Accessed 28 August 2018.

A Joking Relationship. Directed by John K. Marshall, Documentary Educational Resources, 1973.

Kääpä, Pietari. “Cyclical Conceptualizations of Time: Ecocritical Perspectives on Sami Film Culture.” *Ecocriticism and Indigenous Studies: Conversations from Earth to Cosmos*, edited by Joni Adamson and Salma Monani, Routledge, 2016, pp. 136-153.

Kadaganan sa Banwaan Ning mga Engkanto. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Roeder Camañag, Angeli Bayani and Perry Dizon, Sine Olivia, 2007.

Kaplan, E. Ann. *Climate Trauma: Foreseeing the Future in Dystopian Film and Fiction*, Rutgers University Press, 2016.

_ _. *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature,* Rutgers University Press, 2005.

Kaplan, E. Ann and Ban Wang, editors. *Trauma and Cinema: Cross-Cultural Explorations,* Hong Kong University Press, 2008.

Kaur, Raminder & Mariagiulia Grassilli. “Towards a Fifth Cinema.” *Third Text*, vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 1-25.

Kim, Ji-Hoon. “Learning About Time: An Interview with Apichatpong Weerasethakul.” *Film Quarterly,* vol. 64, no. 4, Summer 201, pp. 48-52.

Kim, Suk-Young. *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea*, The University of Michigan Press, 2010.

Kim, Suzy, editor. *episteme: Natural Disasters, Man-Made Disasters*, issue 1, 2020, pp. 1-2.

Kinatay. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Coco Martin, Maria Isabel Lopez and John Regala, Centerstage Productions, 2009.

Klein, Naomi. "Let Them Drown: The Violence of Othering in a Warming World." *episteme: Natural Disasters, Man-Made Disasters*, issue 1, 2020, pp. 3-7.

Koepnick, Lutz P. *The Long Take: Art Cinema and the Wondrous*, University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Lagsa, Bobby. "Plight of the Badjao: Forgotten, nameless, faceless." *Rappler,* 5 Dec. 2015, www.rappler.com/nation/badjao-nameless-forgotten-faceless. Accessed 1 Sep. 2020.

"Last Nomads of the Sea Tossed by Modern Winds and Piracy." *Sinchi*, 02 Feb. 2018, www.sinchi-foundation.com/news/last-nomads-sea-modern-winds-piracy/. Accessed 02 Oct. 2020.

The Last Refuge: The Aetas of the Philippines. Directed by Matthew Westfall, performances by Rufino Tima and Randy Oglesby, Amphion Production, 1996.

Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*, translated by Catherine Porter, Harvard University Press, 1993.

Lavallee, Guillaume. "Philippines' Aeta people 'beggars' in their own land." *Rappler,* 07 Aug. 2015, www.rappler.com/nation/philippines-aeta-beggars-own-land. Accessed 20 Jun. 2020.

Laxamana, Jason Paul. "Brillante Mendoza's 'Manoro' and the Captive Audience." *The Prodigal Mole Cricket,* 8 Feb. 2009, kamaru.blogspot.com/2009/02/brillante-mendozas-manoro-and-captive.html. Accessed 4 Feb. 2018.

Lee, Pam Tau. "Stop the Lumad Killings." *Indigenous Environmental Network,* www.ienearth.org/stop-the-lumad-killings/. Accessed 05 May 2020.

Lim, Bliss Cua. *Translating Time: Cinema, the Fantastic, and Temporal Critique*, Duke University Press, 2009.

Lim, Song Hwee. "Temporal Aesthetics of Drifting: Tsai Ming-liang and a Cinema of Slowness." *Slow Cinema*, edited by Tiago de Luca and Nuno Barradas Jorge, Edinburgh University Press, 2015, pp. 87-98.

Lola. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Rustica Carpio and Anita Linda, Swift Productions and Centerstage Productions, 2009.

Lorenzo, Clarissa M. “Filipino Culture of Filling up Space in a Gated Community.” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 216, 2016, pp. 545 – 551.

Lowe, Lisa and David Lloyd, editors. *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital,* Duke University Press, 1997.

Maalaala Mo Kaya: Abo. Directed by Olivia Lamasan, performances by Roderick Paulate, Caridad Sanchez, and Bembol Roco, ABS-CBN, 1995.

_ _*: Basket* . Directed by Jerome Chavez Pobocan, performance by Judy Ann Santos, ABS-CBN, 2001.

_ _*: Ilaw.* Directed by Dado Lumibao*,* performances by Jhong Hilario and Zaijan Jaranilla, ABS-CBN, 2018.

_ _*: 600 Pesos.* Directed by John Lapus, performances by Maymay Entrata, Nyoy Volante and Mercedes Cabral, ABS-CBN, 2019.

Macalandag, Regina. *Otherizing the Badjao: A Spatial Imagery of State Exclusion and Societal Otherization.* MA thesis. International Institute of Social Studies, 2009. Erasmus University Thesis Repository, 2009.

MacDonald, Scott. “The Ecocinema Experience.” *Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, edited by Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt, Routledge, 2013, pp. 17-41.

_ _. ‘‘Toward an Eco-Cinema.’’ *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, vol. 11, no. 2, Summer 2004, pp. 107–32.

Macdougall, David. *Transcultural Cinema*, Princeton University Press, 1998.

Machiorlatti, Jennifer. “Ecocinema, Ecojustice and Indigenous Worldviews: Native and First Nations Media as Cultural Recovery.” *Framing the World: Explorations in Ecocriticism and Film,* edited by Paula Willoquet-Maricondi, University of Virginia, 2010, pp. 62-80.

Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject,* Princeton University Press, 2005.

_ _. *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report*, Princeton University Press, 2016.

_ _. “Religious Freedom, Minority Rights, and Geopolitics.” *Politics of Religious Freedom*, edited by Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Saba Mahmood, and Peter G. Danchin, The University of Chicago Press, 2015, pp. 142-148.

Mai, Nadin. “Lav Diaz: Slow Burn.” *Guernica,* 15 Jan. 2016, www.guernicamag.com/slow-burn/. Accessed 28 August 2018.

_ _. “Storm Children, Book One – Lav Diaz (2014).” *The Art(s) of Slow Cinema, 4 Nov. 2014,* theartsofslowcinema.com/2014/11/04/storm-children-book-onelavdiaz-2014/. Accessed 4 Apr. 2021.

——. *The Aesthetics of Absence and Duration in the Post-Trauma Cinema of Lav Diaz*. Diss. University of Stirling, 2015.

——. “The concentrationary universe in the films of Lav Diaz.” *The Art(s) of Slow Cinema,* 8 Sep. 2014, theartsofslowcinema.com/2014/09/08/the-concentrationary-universe-in-the-films-of-lav-diaz-paper/. Accessed 28 August 2018.

Malayang III, Ben. “Tenure rights and ancestral domains in the Philippines. A study of the roots of conflict.” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, The Philippines Historical and Social Studies,* vol. 157, no. 3, 2001, pp. 661-676.

The Manila Times. “Brillante Mendoza’s life and art at The Met.” 20 Sep. 2016, www.manilatimes.net/brillante-mendozas-life-and-art-at-the-met/286901/. Accessed 20 Jan. 2018.

Manoro. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Jonalyn Ablong and Edgar Ablong, Center Stage Productions and Holy Angel University Center for Kapampangan Studies, 2006.

“Manoro “The Teacher”.” *Youtube*, uploaded by rashjida, 19 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLXTvH7b1hI.

Marks, Laura. *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, and the Senses,* Duke University Press, 1995.

Ma’ Rosa. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Jaclyn Jose, Julio Diaz and Andi Eigenman, Centerstage Productions, 2016.

Marshall, Lee. “To Dream with the Ancient Kings.” *Queen’s Quarterly*, vol. 123, no. 2, Summer 2016, pp. 230-241.

Martínez-Falquina, Silvia. “Postcolonial Trauma Theory in the Contact Zone: The Strategic Representation of Grief in Edwidge Danticat’s *Claire of the Sea Light*.” *Decolonizing Trauma Studies: Trauma and Postcolonialism,* edited by Sonya Andermahr, MDPI, 2016, pp. 125-152.

Marzano, Nicola. “Third Cinema Today.” *Offscreen*, vol. 13, no. 6, June 2009, offscreen.com/view/third_cinema_today. Accessed 1 June 2020.

Masahista. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Coco Martin, Jaclyn Jose and Allan Paule, Gee Films International and Centerstage Productions, 2005.

McGowan, Todd. *Out of Time: Desire in Atemporal Cinema,* University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Melancholia. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Angeli Bayani, Perry Dizon, Roeder Camañag, Sine Olivia, 2008.

Mendizabal, Adrian. “Lav Diaz: A Critique of Time.” 3 Dec. 2014. Media 210, University of the Philippines, student paper.

—-. “The Constitution of Time in Lav Diaz’s Cinema.” May 2015. Film 270, University of the Philippines, student paper.

—-. “Three Opening Scenes of Lav Diaz.” 9 Oct. 2015. University of the Philippines, student paper.

Mercer, Kobena. “Black Hair/Style Politics.” *New Formations*, no. 3, 1987, pp. 33-54.

Mga Anak ng Unos. Directed by Lav Diaz, DMZ Docs and Sine Olivia Pilipinas, 2014.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. *When the Moon Waxes Red: Representation, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, Routledge, 1991.

Misek, Richard. “Dead Time: Cinema, Heidegger, and Boredom.” *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, vol. 24, no. 5, 2010, pp. 777-785.

Moghissi, Haideh. “Islamic Feminism Revisited.” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* vol. 31, no. 1, 2011, pp. 76-84.

Moi, Un Noir. Directed by Jean Rouch, produced by Pierre Braunberger and Roger Felytoux, 1958.

Molintas, Jose Mencio. “The Philippine Indigenous Peoples’ Struggle for Land and Life: Challenging Legal Texts.” *Arizona Journal of International & Comparative Law,* vol. 21, no. 1, 2004, pp. 269-306.

Monani, Salma. “Evoking Sympathy and Empathy: The Ecological Indian and Indigenous Activism.” *Moving Environments: Affect, Emotion, Ecology, and Film*, edited by Alexa Weik von Mossner, Wilfred Laurier, 2014, pp. 225-247.

Mori, Masami. “The Controversy of Universal Human Rights versus Local Perceptions and Muslim Gender Practices in the Philippines.” *Islam and Cultural Diversity in Southeast Asia,* edited by Ikuya Tokoro, Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa-Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2015, pp. 135-54.

Mukherjee, Rahul. “Anticipating Ruinations: Ecologies of ‘Make Do’ and ‘Left With’.” *journal of visual culture,* Vol. 16, No. 3, 2017, pp. 287-209.

Mula sa Kung Ano ang Noon. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Perry Dizon, Roeder Camañag, Hazel Orencio, Karenina Haniel, Mailes Kanapi, Sine Olivia Pilipinas, 2014.

Nanook of the North. Directed by Robert Flaherty, Pathe, 1922.

Navarro, Erwin. *Living by the Day: A Study of the Badjaos in Tawi-Tawi, Southwest Philippines.* MA thesis. The Arctic University of Norway, 2015. Center for Peace Studies, 2015.

Neale, Steve. “Introduction 2: The Long Take—Concepts, Practices, Technologies, and Histories.” *The Long Take: Critical Approaches,* edited by John Gibbs and Douglas Pye, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 27-41.

Neimanis, Astrida. *Bodies of Water: Postman Feminist Phenomenology,* Bloomsbury, 2017.

Nixon, Rob. “The Anthropocene: The Promise and Pitfalls of an Epochal Idea.” *Future Remains: A Cabinet of Curiosities*, edited by Gregg Mitman, Marco Armiero, and Robert S. Emmett, Chicago University Press, pp.1-20.

Nkrumah, Kwame. “Society and Ideology.” *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then,* edited by Prasenjit Duara, Routledge, 2004, pp. 64-74.

Norte: Hangganan ng Kasaysayan. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Sid Lucero, Angeli Bayani, and Archie Alemania, Wacky O Productions, Kayan Productions, Origin8 Media, 2013.

Nubla, Gladys. "Managing the "Moro Problem": Fractured Nation/Narration in Bagong Buwan." *positions*, 2011, vol.19, no. 2, pp. 393-420.

Once Upon a Time in Anatolia. Directed by Nuri Bilge Ceylan, performances by Muhammet Uzuner, Yilmaz Erdogan, Taner Birsel, Zeynofilm, Production 2006, 1000 Volt, 2011.

Orejas, Tonette, Anselmo Roque and Armand Galang. "Aetas cry discrimination." inquirer.net, 01 Aug. 2013, www.newsinfo.inquirer.net/456451/aetas-cry-discrimination. Accessed 20 Jun. 2020.

Oro. Directed by Alvin Yapan, performances by Irma Adlawan, Mercedes Cabral and Joem Bascom, Feliz Film Productions, 2016.

"'Oro' director, producer banned from joining 2017 MMFF." *ABS-CBN News*, 6 Jan. 2017, news.abs-cbn.com/entertainment/01/06/17/oro-director-producer-banned-from- joining-2017-mmff. Accessed 23 Jun. 2019.

Oshima, Nagisa. *Cinema, Censorship, and the State: The Writings of Nagisa Oshima: 1956-1978,* The MIT Press, 1992.

Pabaon sa Buhay. Directed by Pepe Diokno, performances by Norman King and Jonalyn Ablong, Safeguard, 2018.

Ang Panahon ng Halimaw. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Piolo Pascual, Shaina Magdayao and Bituin Escalante, Epicmedia, Sine Olivia Pilipinas, 2018.

Pedro Tunasan. Directed by Celso Ad Castillo, performances by Lito Lapid, Tina Revilla, and George Estregan, LL Productions, 1983.

Princess Naranja. Directed by Nemesio Caravana, performances by Fernando Poe Jr., Elizabeth Ramsey and Lani Oteyza, Premiere Productions, 1960.

Pulido, Laura. "Racism and the Anthropocene." *Future Remains: A Cabinet of Curiosities,* edited by Gregg Mitman, Marco Armiero, and Robert S. Emmett, Chicago University Press, pp. 116-128.

Rattee, James. “The Search for Meaning in Once Upon a Time in Anatolia (Nuri Bilge Ceylan 2011).” *The Long Take: Critical Approaches,* edited by John Gibbs and Douglas Pye, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, pp. 207-220.

Reid, Anthony. *Imperial Alchemy: Nationalism and Political Identity in Southeast Asia*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Richardson, Michael. “Climate Trauma, or the Affects of the Catastrophe to Come.” *Environmental Humanities,* vol. 10, no. 1, 2018, pp. 1-19.

Robles, Alan. “The Philippines’ communist rebellion is Asia’s longest-running insurgency.” *South China Morning Post,* 16 Sep. 2019, www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3027414/explained-philippines-communist-rebellion-asias-longest-running. Accessed 2 Feb. 2021.

Rocha, Glauber. “The Aesthetics of Hunger.” www.amherst.edu/media/view/38122/original/ ROCHA_Aesth_Hunger.pdf, pp. 13-14.

Rust, Stephen and Salma Monani. “Introduction: Cuts to Dissolves—Defining and Ecocinema Studies.” *Ecocinema Theory and Practice*, edited by Stephen Rust, Salma Monani, and Sean Cubitt, Routledge, 2013, pp. 1-13.

Saadi Nikro, Norman. “Situating Postcolonial Trauma Studies.” *Postcolonial Text*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2014, pp. 1-21.

Said, Edward. *Orientalism,* Pantheon Books, 1978.

Sakmit. Directed by Seph Tan, performances by Leon Miguel, Reynaldo Samaco, and Publio Briones III, Southside Cinema, 2019.

Saljoughi, Sara. “Third Cinema Now.” Film Criticism, vol. 40, no. 1, Jan. 2016, www.quod.lib.umich.edu/f/fc/13761232.0040.128?view=text;rgn=main. Accessed 1 June 2020.

Santos, Kara. “Youth Reaffirm Indigenous Identity.” *Global Issues*, 07 Jun. 2012, www.globalissues.org/news/2012/06/07/13938. Accessed 21 Jan. 2018.

Schoonover, Karl. “Wastrels of Time: Slow Cinema’s Laboring Body, the Political Spectator, and the Queer.” *Framework*, vol. 53, no. 1, Spring 2012, pp. 65-78.

Seitz, Stefan. “Coping Strategies in an Ethnic Minority Group: The Aeta of Mount Pinatubo.” *Disasters*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1998, pp. 76-90.

Shoji, Sadao and Tadashi Takahashi. "Environmental and Agricultural Significance of Volcanic Ash Soils." *Global Journal of Environmental Research,* vol. 6, 2002, pp. 113-135.

Siglo ng Pagluluwal. Directed by Lav Diaz, performances by Perry Dizon, Angel Aquino, Bart Guingona, Sine Olivia, 2011.

Sobchack, Vivian. *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture,* University of California Press, 2004.

Sologastoa, Glenda. "Who's behind the proliferation of Badjao beggars? 30 rounded up in Day 2 of 'Oplan Sapupo'." *Panay News*, 15 Nov. 2017, www.panaynews.net/whos-behind-proliferation-of-badjao-beggars-30-rounded-up-in-day-2-of-oplan-sapupo/. Accessed 04 Sep. 2020.

Stray Dogs. Directed by Tsai Ming-liang, performance by Lee Kang-sheng, Vincent Wang, 2013.

Tadiar, Neferti X. M. "Decolonization, "Race," and Remaindered Life under Empire." *Qui Parle*, vol. 23 , no. 2, Spring/Summer 2015, pp. 135-160.

Taklub. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Nora Aunor, Julio Diaz, and Lou Veloso, Centerstage Productions, 2015.

"Theories of Realism." *Film Reference*, www.filmreference.com/encyclopedia/Independent-Film-Road-Movies/Realism-THEORIES-OF-REALISM.html. Accessed 03 June 2020.

Tima, Rufino. *Leaves on the Water: Struggle for Survival of Pinatubo Aetas*, Foundation for Cultural Survival, 2005.

Tirador. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Coco Martin, Jiro Manio and Christopher King, Centerstage Productions, 2007.

Tkacheva, Elena. "Lumad people claim their language and identity despite extreme violence." *The Upstream Journal,* Jan. 2016, www.upstreamjournal.org/lumads-of-tandag-philippines/. Accessed 02 Jun. 2020.

Toohey, Aileen. "Badjaos: Representations of Difference in the Philippines." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* vol. 36, no. 2, 2005, pp. 281-312.

Thy Womb. Directed by Brillante Mendoza, performances by Nora Aunor and Bembol Roco, Center Stage Productions, 2012.

Tu pug imatuy. Directed by Arnel Barbarona, performances by Malona Sulatan, Jong Monzon, and Luis Georlin Banaag III, Red Motion Media, 2017.

Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives. Directed by Apichatpong Weerasethakul, performances by Thanapat Saisaymar, Jenjira Pongpas, Sakda Kaewbuadee, Kick the Machine, 2010.

Valerio, Elvin Amerigo. "Defining the Aesthetics of Philippine Independent Cinema: An Interview with Brillante Mendoza." *Asian Cinema*, vol. 22, no. 2, Fall/Winter 2011, pp. 47-73.

Valle, Guillem. "The Badjao: Nomads of the Sea." *Aljazeera*, 9 Dec. 2015, www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2015/12/9/the-badjao-nomads-of-the-sea-2/#:~:text=Malaysia%2FIndonesia%20%E2%80%93%20The%20Badjao%20are,diving%20for%20fish%20and%20pearls. Accessed 25 Sep. 2020.

Visser, Irene. "Decolonizing Trauma Theory: Retrospect and Prospects." *Decolonizing Trauma Studies: Trauma and Postcolonialism,* edited by Sonya Andermahr, MDPI, 2016, pp. 7-23.

Wailings in the Forest. Directed by Bagane Fiola, Mark Limbaga, Joel Geolamen, Bem Di Lera, Charlie Daclan, and Janna Moya, performances by Jhea Mae Laglagan, Omeles Laglagan, and Ailyn Laglagan, Origane Films and QCinema, 2016.

Ward, Abigail, editor. *Postcolonial Traumas: Memory, Narrative, Resistance,* Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Watts, Jonathan. "I tended to the bodies: attacked by the Philippine army." *The Guardian*, 21 Jul. 2018, www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jul/21/philippines-lives-land-lost-coffee-empire-militarised-politics. Accessed 03 Jun. 2020.

What Time Is It There? Directed by Tsai Ming-liang, performances by Lee Kang-sheng, Chen Shiang-chyi, Lu Yi-Ching, Bruno Pesery, 2001.

Willoquet-Maricondi, Paula. "Shifting Paradigms from Environmentalist Films to Ecocinema." *Framing the World: Explorations in Ecocriticism and Film,* edited by Paula Willoquet-Maricondi, University of Virginia, 2010, pp. 43-61.

The Wind Will Carry Us. Directed by Abbas Kiarostami, performances by Behzad Dorani, Noghre Asadi, Roushan Karam Elmi, MK2 Productions, 1999.

Xavier, Ismail. “Historical Allegory.” *A Companion to Film Theory*, edited by Toby Miller and Robert Stam, Blackwell Publishing, 2004, pp. 333-362.

Young, Robert. *Postcolonialism: A Historical Introduction,* Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

"Zahiri." In The Oxford Dictionary of Islam. Ed. John L. Esposito. Oxford Islamic Studies Online. 05-Dec-2016. <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2553>.